



THE REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS

August 30, 2005

Dear Colleague:

As we move forward collectively in strengthening the United Nations so it can address the many challenges and threats confronting our world, it is essential that we have an Organization that is fully accountable, transparent, and efficient, with a workforce based on the highest standards of integrity and competency. The achievement of the many objectives across the broad spectrum of the reform agenda will not be possible unless the Secretariat and other UN institutions are effectively managed and have strong oversight and accountability mechanisms to support them.

While we generally agree with the thrust of the current text in this section, we believe that it needs to be strengthened to create a more forceful momentum for change. With this in mind, I'd like to share with you our views on key paragraphs. I have also enclosed our proposed specific revisions for this section of the Document.

- **Paragraph 141** – The paragraph suggests that the UN Secretariat is only accountable to the General Assembly, which is one component of the multifaceted UN. Accordingly, the United States proposes a change to clarify that the Secretariat is accountable to the membership of the Organization.
- **Paragraph 142** – The Secretary-General, as the chief administrative officer of the Organization, is clearly responsible for carrying out the duties involved with this position. There is no need “to encourage” him to do this. What is needed is for the UN’s membership to provide adequate authority and flexibility to carry out these responsibilities.

The reference to hiring and conditions of service for UN staff in the third bullet point should be focused sharply on efficiency, competence, and integrity—as the UN Charter states—and not on the need for “equitable” geographical distribution, which is of lesser importance. In addition, the hiring of individuals at senior and policy levels should not be singled out for special treatment.

- **Paragraph 143** – The need for a thorough review of regulations, rules, and policies dealing with human resources and budgetary issues has long been evident, and we support the Secretary-General’s intent to do so. With the current text in the first bullet point, however, the review would be constrained by “existing resolutions and ongoing endeavors.” As this approach would only produce a “business as usual” outcome, we have proposed a change to remove this constraint and give the Secretary-General a broader mandate for the review.

The second bullet point similarly sets constraints for the requested overview of mandates more than five years old because any recommended changes would have to be done “in accordance with rules and regulations on programme planning.” Here again, we believe this would result in a “business as usual” outcome rather than a serious, unfettered analysis of the UN’s many activities and operations. Consequently, we have proposed to remove this constraint.

- **Paragraph 145** – Making sure that the Secretary-General has sufficient authority and flexibility to move resources from low to high priority activities is critical to his mandate as the Organization’s chief administrative officer. By referring to the “relevant rules and regulations established by the General Assembly,” the text seems to pre-empt any proposal to make needed changes. We have proposed deletion of this phrase.
- **Paragraph 146** – While the U.S. has not proposed any substantive changes to this paragraph on oversight improvements, we want to stress our firm belief that better oversight, including a stronger and more independent Office of Internal Oversight Services, is absolutely critical to reforming the UN. The current text encompasses many of the necessary measures to do this.
- **Paragraph 147** – Reports of sexual exploitation and abuse by a small number of UN peacekeepers over the last year have made it clear that the Organization must change its policies and practices without delay. We therefore recommend that this text be strengthened to highlight the need for full and immediate implementation of the recommendations made by the Secretary-General’s advisor on this issue.

For the sake of the rest of the work that the UN does, it is important that we get this management portion of the UN reform effort right. I ask for your support in meeting the challenge before us and I look forward to working with you as we move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John R. Bolton". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

John R. Bolton
Ambassador

enclosure

U.S. Proposals for UN Management Reform Section

Secretariat

141. We recognize that in order to effectively comply with the principles and objectives of the Charter in a new changing world, we need an efficient Secretariat which is appropriately accountable to the membership~~General Assembly as the chief representative, deliberative body of the organization.~~

142. We recognize the necessity of having a capable, efficient and transparent Secretariat which operates in a culture of organizational accountability and integrity, and consequently:

- We stress~~recognize~~ the role of the Secretary-General as the chief administrative officer of the Organization in accordance with Article 97 of the UN Charter, ~~encourage him to exercise his duties in accordance with the principles of the Charter,~~ and are committed to pledge to ensure that he will have sufficient authority and flexibility to carry out his managerial responsibilities;
- We welcome the reforms initiated by the Secretary-General, including new senior management committees and actions to strengthen oversight and accountability, reinforce ethical conduct, enhance transparency and improve management performance, and invite him to report to the General Assembly on the progress made in implementing all such measures;
- We urge the Secretary-General to ensure that the paramount consideration in the employment of the staff and in the determination of the conditions of service shall be the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence, integrity, with due regard paid to the importance of recruiting the staff on as wide and equitable a geographical basis as possible, ~~in particular in the senior and policy-making levels,~~ and encourage him to promote secure gender balance in the staffing of the Organization;
- We welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure ethical conduct, more extensive financial disclosure for UN officials, and enhanced protection for whistleblowers, and his intention to create an Ethics Office with independent status within the Secretariat to provide the necessary capacity and advice on all ethics-related matters. We request that the Secretary-General submit further details on the creation of the Ethics Office to the General Assembly during the 60th session;
- We emphasize that ongoing management reform in the UN should make full use of information and communication technologies, helping to give greater efficiency in the use of resources and enhancing organizational capability throughout the UN system;

- We commend the Secretary-General's efforts to further enhance the effective management of the United Nations and for his commitment to modernize the United Nations, ~~in particular the Headquarters.~~

Management Reform

143. We further recognize the need to carry out managerial reforms in order to make more efficient use of the economic and human resources available to the Organization and thus better comply with its principles and objectives. In this context, we call on the Secretary-General to submit an implementation plan for management reforms to a plenary meeting of the General Assembly for consideration and decision in the first quarter of 2006, which will include the following elements:

- A full review of the budgetary and human-resources rules and policies under which the Organization operates, with a view to modernising and streamlining them and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the UN Secretariat. This should be done ~~taking into account~~ with appropriate consideration of the relevant General Assembly resolutions and ongoing endeavours;
- A ~~over~~ review of all mandates, originating from existing resolutions of the General Assembly and its organs, older than five years ~~to complement the existing periodic review of activities.~~ This review would take into account the Organization's ~~continuing functions and priorities~~ and would provide an indication of programmatic changes as well as resources which could be shifted, ~~in accordance with rules and regulations on programme planning,~~ in order to strengthen and up-date the programme of work of the Organization;
- A detailed proposal on the framework for a one-time staff buy-out to modernize and improve personnel structure and quality, including an indication of costs involved, and mechanisms to ensure that it achieves its intended purpose.

144. We pledge to take early action on the Secretary General's implementation plan.

145. We commit to ensure that the Secretary-General has sufficient authority and flexibility to redeploy posts and resources, in order to ensure the most effective implementation of the Organization's mandates, ~~under which could require revisions to~~ the relevant rules and regulations established by the General Assembly, and invite him to report to the General Assembly each year on outcomes.

146. We acknowledge problems that have arisen as a result of weaknesses in the Organization's oversight and management processes. These disclosures have cast doubt on the credibility of the Organization's work, and therefore, we resolve to undertake the

following measures to strengthen and ensure the independence of the Organization's oversight bodies:

- We underscore the need to focus the expertise and resources of the OIOS on audit and investigations, and increase the capacity of the Office to carry out these functions;
- We request the Secretary-General to commission an evaluation of the UN's entire internal control environment, including the roles and responsibilities of management, internal oversight, the external Board of Auditors, and the Joint Inspection Unit in order to determine the way to strengthen the OIOS and the entire oversight system. This evaluation should take place within the context of General Assembly resolution 59/264 which called for the Secretary-General to undertake a comprehensive review of governance arrangements. Given immediate needs in this area, the recommendations arising from the evaluation should be presented to the 60th General Assembly in its second resumed session;
- We decide to establish an independent oversight advisory committee of experts whose members will be nominated by the Secretary General and appointed by the General Assembly. The purpose of this committee is to provide the General Assembly with better tools to exercise its governance responsibilities over the operations of the Organization. This committee would have the authority to, *inter alia*, make recommendations to the General Assembly on the resource and budget requirements for the OIOS, provide the Members States with assessments on the work of the OIOS and the external Board of Audit, and identify possible gaps in UN's oversight coverage;
- We authorize OIOS to provide internal oversight to United Nations' agencies that request such services. This should only be done in such a way as to ensure that internal oversight services to the UN Secretariat will not be compromised.

147. We insist on the highest standards of behaviour from all UN personnel and support the considerable efforts underway with respect to the implementation of the Secretary-General's policy of zero-tolerance regarding sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations personnel, both at headquarters and in the field. We underscore the importance of the recommendations of the Secretary General's Advisor on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeeping Personnel, and urge that these recommendations be fully implemented without delay. We encourage the Secretary-General to submit proposals to the General Assembly leading to a comprehensive approach for victims' assistance by 31 December 2005.