

GB March 2021
PFA Employers' written comments

- [PFA/10](#) **Matters relating to the Joint Inspection Unit**

The Employers' group expresses support to the Office's position to the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination's comments. In relations to strengthening policy research uptake and enhancing inter-agency collaboration, policy coherence among the different UN agencies would need to be prioritized and any such research collaboration should respect and meet constituents needs. In pursuing recommendations that are currently under perusal (e.g. cloud computing service, procurement for commercial service providers), the Office should consider the return on investment, associated risks and budgetary implications for the long-term. On inter-agency mobility, the Employers' Group support the Office position on 'non acceptance' of the recommendation requesting the Director-General to enable all UN system staff members to compete for vacant posts on a basis equal to that established for ILO staff as the unique tripartite mandate and governance structure of the ILO results in specific skills and competencies of ILO staff that is critical in serving the organization's constituents.

Governing Body – 341st Session, March 2021
Programme, Financial and Administrative Section
Audit and Oversight Segment

Workers' Group Comments

Document for Ballot by Correspondence

GB.341/PFA/10
Matters relating to the Joint Inspection Unit

The Workers' Group thanks the Office for the document and information related to the eight reports between 2018 and 2019.

Regarding the recommendation on *strengthening policy research uptake in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* we concur with the comments made by the CEB, notably the importance to take account of each organization's mandate and strategic objectives. We also refer the Office to the comments we made on the research strategy in October 2019 and on the high-level evaluation on research and knowledge management strategies and approaches last November.

On the *review of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women* we took note of the Office's commitment to enhance its efforts to improve performance within the framework of the ILO Action Plan for Gender Equality 2018-21, while maintaining its alignment with the System-wide Action Plan. We also invite the Office to participate in the review process of the next phases of the action plan in 2022-23.

Following the *review of the integration of disaster risk reduction in the work of the United Nations system in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* we concur with the Office comments. We also would like to highlight the centrality of the ILO's standards, in particular R. 205, in strengthening peaceful and resilient societies as the key ILO contribution to disaster risk reduction, including in relation to the ILO's response to the Covid-19 crisis.

On the *review of change management in United Nations system organizations* we note with satisfaction that all recommendations are already in place in the ILO.

In respect of *managing cloud computing services in the United Nations system*, the Workers' Group concurs with the comments of the CEB and the Office. We support the Office in thoroughly checking cost-effectiveness and choice of cloud provider on a case by case basis in terms of modernising its cloud computing services.

On the *review of audit and oversight committees in the United Nations system* we took note of the Office's response to the relevant recommendations. We also refer the Office to the comment we will make on the Report of the IOAC that contains proposed changes to the Committee's terms of reference. (GB.341/PFA/8)

Turning to the *review of staff exchange and similar inter-agency mobility measures in United Nations system organizations*, we have taken note of the CEB comments. We noted that the Office is still considering recommendations 7 and 9 due to issues related to compatibility with the ILO's internal rules and governance framework. In terms of creating a common management

structure (recommendation 7), we agree that this should be seen in the light of the complex changes to management structures that are part of the UN reform. In particular, a greater understanding and promotion of the ILO's tripartite structure and normative system throughout the UN reform process is of utmost importance in that regard. We support the non-acceptance of recommendation 8 regarding the competition for UN staff and ILO staff. Any further deliberations on these issues should also include consultation with the ILO staff union.

Lastly, on the *review of contemporary practices in the external outsourcing of services to commercial service providers by United Nations system organizations* we agree with the CEB and Office comments. We took note that the ILO procurement procedures and IT governance mechanisms regarding outsourced services, including its risk assessments, are in line with the recommendations accepted and that the ILO will carefully assess additional action in terms of any added value and cost effectiveness.

GB.341/PFA/10: Matters relating to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU): Reports of the JIU

IMEC statement

1. This statement is made on behalf of the IMEC group.
2. IMEC thanks the Office for the summary and overview of the follow-up given to relevant recommendations in recent reports of the Joint Inspection Unit and the overview of the JIU's programme of work for 2020.
3. IMEC greatly appreciates the work of the Joint Inspection Unit, which is the only independent external oversight body of the UN system, and is of significant importance for efficiency, accountability and transparency within the UN, as well as to create system-wide coherence with the ILO as a key part of the United Nations (UN) system. This is especially relevant from the perspective of the Agenda 2030 on SDGs and the ongoing UN reform, under the challenges of COVID-19. JIU provides for an indispensable input in the conceptualisation and development of collective frameworks that are fit for collective impact, as well as sets of scrutinized and comparable information and data, as required for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the reform.
4. IMEC welcomes that all JIU reports that became available in 2018 and 2019 which have recommendations addressed to the ILO, and had not been included in the previous ILO paper, are included in the reference document with an ILO follow-up. IMEC is pleased to note the generally positive conclusions to the work of the ILO.
5. IMEC looks forward to the ILO taking on forthcoming system-wide reports that will certainly be of relevance to the ILO, including those on cybersecurity and the ethics function.
6. Given the increasingly important role of IT in ILO's daily work, secure and trusted data handling and storage that guarantees data privacy must be a priority. IMEC is interested to learn in more detail how the ILO approaches these questions and where it sees potential to work with the UN International Computing Centre, an organization which is specifically mentioned in the JIU report on Cloud Computing.

7. The document PFA/10 and the two accompanying documents show ILO's constructive approach to the recommendations from previous relevant reports. IMEC appreciates that the Office has continued the procedure of reporting on the JIU recommendations of past three years, a good practice noted by the JIU 2017 report on the follow-up to the JIU reports and recommendations.
8. IMEC is pleased to learn that the ILO in all cases provides for a response to all recommendations. IMEC notes, however, that recently concluded JIU reviews made available in 2020 are not yet included in the papers, including the reports on the state of investigation functions and enterprise risk management, and would look forward to the next ILO paper.
9. IMEC continues to encourage the Office to be current in reflecting their implementation actions in the JIU web-based tracking system, to help us better understand the ILO's follow-up status on the JIU recommendations, especially when no follow up is given.
10. IMEC would highly appreciate if, in future reporting on the follow-up on the various recommendations, the Office would clearly distinguish between the recommendations that were intended for the DG and those for the Governing Body.
11. Finally, IMEC would like to continue to encourage the ILO to actively make use of the possibility to express its priorities by proposing and rating the relevance of topics envisaged for future reviews to be included in the JIU Programme of Work.