**Chief Executives Board
for Coordination**

Report of the High-Level Committee on Management at its forty-fifth session

(2-4 April 2023, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), Dead Sea, Jordan)

Executive Summary

The 45th session of the High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) was generously hosted by UNRWA at the Dead Sea on Monday and Tuesday, 3-4 April. CEB member organisations from across the UN system participated at a high-level. The International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the UN Representatives of Internal Audit Services (UN-RIAS), the UN Representatives of Investigation Services (UN-RIS), the Staff Federations, the UN Medical Directors network (UNMD) and Young UN were present as observers.

UNRWA kindly offered three **field visits to Palestine refugee camps** on Sunday, 2 April, for all interested participants. This offered a unique opportunity for HLCM Members to observe the entity's operations in Jordan and understand the related challenges for the organization.

Prince Mired bin Raad bin Zaid of Jordan, President of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and co-chair of the 2025 Global Disability Summit addressed the Committee to start the first session dedicated to **the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy** and related system-wide challenges and best practices in its implementation. Participants benefitted from insightful presentations from the Advocacy Director of the International Disability Alliance, and the Lead Accessibility Evangelist of Microsoft, who gave practical examples of successful inclusion of persons with disabilities.

HLCM members highlighted the importance of regarding disability inclusion as a cross-cutting issue and as such addressing it in an integrated manner, including issues related to hiring and employment practices, physical and digital accessibility of premises and services, as well as staff knowledge and capacity, and considering it in budgeting and design from the start. In line with the Secretary-General's vision for the United Nations to become an employer of choice for persons with disabilities, participants underscored the necessity of clear guidance and common system agreement in areas such as reasonable accommodation, self-identification of staff and hiring processes and procedures to ensure system-wide applicability.

To address these common challenges and to build upon existing good practices, HLCM requested the Human Resources Network, through its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group, to lead an initiative to advance disability inclusion in an integrated and cross-functional manner. Designated lead entities will ensure work is advanced on all aspects.

With the aim to improve the health and well-being of our workforce, HLCM considered **Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)** in a practical manner by connecting the recently adopted OHS framework to the visit of UNRWA's Palestine refugee camps. The visit confirmed evidence from surveys of organizations that occupational health and safety measures are progressing steadily and are reaching operations.

The HLCM Forum on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) publicized the OHS Repository, a resource hub for information on occupational health and safety available to staff across the UN system, and committed to deliver a proposal for a coordinating mechanism to oversee the UN-wide management of occupational health and safety by the next meeting in fall 2023.

HLCM then considered how the United Nations system can move **towards more diversity and inclusion**. The Committee adopted - as a living document - an internal UN System Glossary of terms on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and also considered an initial Collection of Good Practices and a document laying out principles to support the realization of a shared vision for a just, inclusive and courageous United Nations. Both documents will be finalized by the next meeting in fall.

Under the leadership of the HLCM Vice-Chair, Kelly Clements, the Committee is continuing to work towards instilling an organizational culture that is conducive to **zero tolerance for inaction on sexual harassment** in the UN system.

Recognizing the requirement for continuous and coordinated leadership attention, HLCM endorsed, for the Secretary-General's review and decision, the establishment of a UN Executive Group to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment in the UN System, which would succeed the time-bound Task Force upon the conclusion of its third phase of work in late 2023 that would have completed its original mandate. This UN Executive Group would be constituted along four priority objectives, namely the application of a coordinated system-wide approach to sexual harassment prevention and response, monitoring of progress and impact evaluation, capacity building, and communication and engagement with all relevant stakeholders.

Following the signing of the **Mutual Recognition Statement** by the Secretary-General and 23 other Executive Heads, HLCM continues to drive efficiency gains in the UN system through the mutual recognition of processes. The Committee endorsed a Model Communication for an Awareness Campaign on Mutual Recognition in Procurement. Furthermore, HLCM identified implementation bottlenecks to be removed, asked for a short list of these for priority attention, and requested guidance to advance operationalization for non-procurement functions. The Committee was pleased to receive a statement from the United Nations Representatives of Internal Audit Services supporting the Mutual Recognition Principle and aiming to further its goals.

With a view to **Sustainability Practices in UN Operations**, UNHCR provided a presentation of innovative sustainability initiatives within its entity, and other member organisations provided examples of their efforts towards reducing CO_2 emissions. Members recalled with appreciation the work already being carried out by the UN Environment Management Group, but also recognized that still more investment is needed in this respect. A proposal from UNHCR to conduct an inter-agency workshop series focusing on greening of fleet, travel, and buildings, to share learnings and best practices as well as to identify potential collaboration opportunities, was met with enthusiasm by the Committee.

With the aim to solve data fragmentation and data transportability across United Nations organizations, and as a key enabler for the simplification and streamlining of processes and transactions across all business functions, HLCM had launched the **UN Digital ID** initiative in 2021. Business scenarios have been identified for implementation, with an emphasis on the importance of digital accessibility, cybersecurity, data protection and stakeholder engagement.

Following the thought-provoking session of the Secretary-General's Senior Management Group on **generative artificial intelligence**, HLCM is starting reflections on the impact of this technology, including its risks and benefits and the impact on the work of the United Nations. The Committee decided to conduct a dedicated discussion on emerging AI technologies, including generative artificial intelligence, during its 46th session in October 2023, as a joint session with HLCP. A special discussion on AI in financial management will also be organized by the Finance and Budget Network (FBN) in July 2023, and would be open to virtual participation by other HLCM Networks.

HLCM discussed the important matter of **Conditionalities on Funding**. At the December 2022 meeting of the UN system Oversight Committees, representatives of the Oversight Committees had raised concerns regarding donors' growing requests to put conditionalities on funding. HLCM encouraged all UN entities to engage with donors through established networks where possible and requested the Finance and Budget Network to continue the dialogue with the United Nations Representatives of Internal Audit Services and United Nations Representatives of Investigation Services, and to engage with the UNSDG Fiduciary Management Oversight Group, resource mobilisation counterparts and other relevant stakeholders on this issue, with a view to establishing a UN system wide coordinated approach to address donor audit and investigation concerns.

At the conclusion of the session, members expressed appreciation for HLCM as a management platform to exchange knowledge and best practices to foster the UN system's coherence and effectiveness. The Committee agreed on the value of continuing to meet face-to-face twice a year, for one- and one-half days or longer, as necessary. Ad-hoc inter-sessional meetings would be convened via virtual means in special circumstances, as appropriate.

I.   Introduction

1.   The High-Level Committee on Management (HLCM) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its forty-fifth session on 2-4 April 2023 at the Dead Sea, generously hosted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). The meeting was chaired by the HLCM Chair, Ms. Catherine Pollard, Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, United Nations, and by the HLCM Vice-Chair, Ms. Kelly T. Clements, Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees.

2.   The HLCM Chair welcomed new HLCM members as well as guests, including representatives from the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), the Staff Federations and Young UN.

3.   The agenda, as adopted by the Committee, focused on the following themes:

   a. United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy;

   b. Occupational Health and Safety;

   c. Towards a More Diverse and Inclusive UN System;

   d. Addressing Sexual Harassment in the UN System;

   e. Mainstreaming Mutual Recognition;

   f.1. Sustainability Practices in UN Operations;

   f.2. UN Digital ID;

   f.3. Impact of Emerging Artificial Intelligence Technologies on UN Business Models;

4.   The list of participants is provided in annex I and the checklist of documents in annex II to the present document.

II.   United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy

5.   The first session of the High-Level Committee on Management meeting addressed disability inclusion and accessibility in relation to the implementation of the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, adopted by the Chief Executives Board (CEB/2019/3) in May 2019, with a view to identifying system-wide challenges and practical ways forward. Introducing the item, the HLCM Chair underscored that disability inclusion is an organizational priority and addressing disability inclusion in internal operations is vital to ensuring achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Progress made since 2019 clearly demonstrates the impact the Strategy has had on system-wide efforts to enhance disability inclusion and accessibility across internal operations. However, with the system meeting only 30 per cent of the Strategy's benchmarks, the Secretary-General requested the High-Level Committee on Management to address this issue on priority to ensure the system takes collective and coordinated action to remove systemic barriers and move more strongly and at greater pace on disability inclusion.

6. Prince Mired bin Raad bin Zaid of Jordan, President of the Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and co-chair of the 2025 Global Disability Summit, addressed the Committee at the commencement of the session, highlighting the importance of leadership responsibility and ownership in driving change on disability inclusion, which has been the ethos on all work being undertaken on disability inclusion in Jordan. Noting the need to mainstream disability inclusion across all sectors and the importance of elevating disability inclusion on the national priority ladder, Prince Mired underscored the opportunity of the Global Disability Summit 2025 for the United Nations to make concrete, tangible commitments and to demonstrate opportunities available to donors to invest in disability inclusion and to highlight the importance and impact of this work moving forward.

7. Advocacy Director of the International Disability Alliance (IDA), Mr. Jose Maria Viera, followed with a presentation on the fundamental importance of consulting and partnering with organizations of persons with disabilities on all areas of the Organization's work, not only those dedicated to disability inclusion. Video testimonies played during the presentation highlighted the positive impact that can be achieved when considering physical and digital accessibility and reasonable accommodation in the workplace, as well as in conferences, events and meetings. Mr. Viera presented key actions Committee members could consider in their forthcoming discussion, such as: enhancing consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities, including in strategic planning processes; advancing human resource policies regarding reasonable accommodation and establishing reasonable accommodation funds; and increasing employment of persons with disabilities and supporting continued development of policies and procedures. IDA has established a helpdesk and technical assistance department which regularly receives requests from across the United Nations system, yet as evidenced in the duplication of these requests, Mr. Viera noted that there are opportunities for enhanced engagement between IDA and the Organization to assess how technical assistance on disability inclusion can most effectively and efficiently be addressed. He informed that IDA is ready to partner with the United Nations to see how best this collaboration could be achieved moving forward.

8. Ms. Hannan Sulieman, Deputy Executive Director (DED), Management of UNICEF and co-chair of the UNSDG Business Innovations Group presented key actions underway in UNICEF to advance and monitor organizational progress on disability inclusion, such as: including 34 disability-disaggregated indicators in UNICEF's Strategic Plan; adding disability tags to monitor expenditure on disability inclusion; launching UNICEF's disability inclusion policy and strategy with set targets for programmes and internal operations to ensure UNICEF becomes a more disability-inclusive organization; establishment of a centrally-managed reasonable accommodation fund with an online portal to receive and monitor reasonable accommodation requests; and establishment of an online physical and digital accessibility helpdesk. In her role as co-chair of the UNSDG Business Innovations Group, DED Sulieman highlighted the need for standard setting and putting in place compliance requirements by entities at the global level to ensure accessibility of operations, digital platforms and office premises at country level. She urged Committee members to consider coordination on system-wide standards and compliance on physical and digital accessibility, and for entities to assess accessibility in order to meet minimum standards. DED Sulieman also urged Committee members to consider activating a stream of work on disability inclusion under the Human Resources Network

to support inter-agency coordination in the area of human resources and disability-inclusive employment. Finally, she recommended consideration to establishing advisory panels of multi-disciplinary professionals such as doctors and occupational therapists to advise quickly on reasonable accommodation requests.

9. Lead Accessibility Evangelist of Microsoft Mr. Hector Minto highlighted the role of digital technology in driving inclusion, and the impact on organizational culture which results from building knowledge and capacity of all staff on disability inclusion. He reiterated the crucial role of executive leadership and collaboration between departments to ensure baseline knowledge on disability inclusion, noting that all Microsoft staff are trained on disability inclusion and digital accessibility. Mr. Minto noted that these efforts have significantly contributed both to the development of accessible tools and software, as well as to reducing stigma in relation to self-identification by staff with disabilities. With regard to reasonable accommodation, Mr. Minto noted that a centralized fund addresses both cost and cultural concerns relating to requests, noting that on average, the cost of reasonable accommodation is $500 per employee requesting the accommodation, while the centralized nature of the fund removes questions relating to cost which may otherwise hinder requests and approvals.

10. The co-chairs of the Human Resources Network continued the discussion by noting the imperative to increase both the number and the diversity of staff with disabilities across the Organization. Challenges identified by the Human Resources Network in relation to disability inclusion include lack of funding, reasonable accommodation, transparency and data, and recruitment and deployment, while quick wins identified included the exchange of joint products and trainings, development of minimum accessibility standards, joint career fairs, review processes and support for staff and families, and establishment and review of common policy frameworks, including occupational safety and health frameworks. The co-chairs reiterated that while there is a key role for the Network to play in the area of human resources, disability inclusion cuts across all areas of work and will take active engagement across all sectors to achieve meaningful change.

11. The ensuing discussion highlighted that senior level commitment, which exists as a direct result of the Strategy is driving change on disability inclusion. Yet it is evident that many entities remain at a low level of maturity in relation to practical implementation, and Committee members called for a long-term, consistent, integrated and cross-functional approach across internal operations on this issue. Committee members underscored the cross-cutting nature of disability inclusion, and highlighted the adoption of entity-specific strategies and identification of senior-level champions on disability inclusion as vital to driving the work forward. Interventions called for continued and sustained political leadership and high-level support across the Organization on disability inclusion.

12. Existing good practice elaborated by Committee members included the integration of disability inclusion in strategic plans and budgets with associated indicators to measure success, and the investment of dedicated disability inclusion staff and teams to enable entities to significantly scale their work and ensure availability of in-house expertise. Consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities was highlighted as foundational to achieving disability inclusion, with many interventions noting that partnerships currently underway serve to formalize collaboration and leverage the knowledge and technical expertise that organizations of persons

with disabilities are in a unique position to provide. While staff and managers may be aware of the importance of addressing disability inclusion, it was noted that there remains a lack of practical knowledge on how this could be achieved, and numerous interventions highlighted the development and availability of dedicated tools and training materials to build staff knowledge and capacity on disability inclusion. Committee members urged collaboration and coordination to support pooling of these resources to enable the Organization to benefit from existing training materials and learning resources and avoid duplication of efforts.

13. Increased employment of persons with disabilities in the United Nations system was consistently raised as an urgent issue to address. Committee members noted that human resource policies and procedures are being updated to address disability inclusion and new policies are being formulated, yet clear guidance and common system agreement is necessary in areas such as reasonable accommodation, self-identification of staff and hiring processes and procedures. Where self-identification questions have been introduced, it was noted that numbers of staff with disabilities remain low. The establishment of Employee Resource Groups and career fairs inclusive of persons with disabilities were highlighted as practical actions underway, however it was recognized that in relation to human resources, disability inclusion needs to be considered in a more holistic way, taking into account the diversity of persons with disabilities.

14. Enhancement of physical and digital accessibility, both through improvement to existing premises and services as well as in the development and acquisition of new infrastructure and services was highlighted, however it was noted that financial resourcing remains a constraint. Committee members noted that particularly at field level, installations and office spaces are rented and many are not accessible. The development and acquisition of premises and services should take into account accessibility from the design phase, as when doing so, costs to address accessibility are minimal, which will ensure the Organization is meeting its commitment to inclusion. In relation to conference and event management, the accessibility of remote and in-person meetings, from registration and conference materials to sign language interpretation and captioning are increasing, but primarily occur when meeting organizers request it, and delivery is often constrained by financing. In this regard, Committee members noted that disability inclusion and accessibility must be addressed in budgets put forward to management committees, donors and Member States. Interventions highlighted that new installations are increasingly considering accessibility, and simple elements to enhance accessibility overall should also be considered on a more systematic basis. Standards and guidelines in relation to digital technology are being established which can benefit all entities and should be utilized, as accessible information and communications technologies can make significant contributions to advancing disability inclusion across the Organization.

15. In summarizing the discussion, the HLCM Chair highlighted that in line with the Secretary-General's vision for the United Nations to become an employer of choice for persons with disabilities, increasing the number of staff with disabilities across the Organization should be a key area of work, noting that 85 per cent of the Organization's budget is staffing. In relation to accessibility, no new investments should create new or additional barriers for persons with disabilities, and new investments should consider accessibility from the outset. The HLCM Chair noted that the system needs to be in a better position to track, monitor and measure how it is progressing

on disability inclusion, and while financial constraints should not impede action, coordinated efforts are required to ensure that existing resources are systematically invested in a manner that contributes to disability inclusion and accessibility, rather than maintaining the status quo.

16. The HLCM Chair concluded by reiterating that the Organization must do more, and in an integrated and cross-functional manner, to build on existing practices and to learn from each other. She reinforced that disability inclusion must no longer be considered a standalone issue, and senior leadership will be key in driving disability inclusion forward, in regularly monitoring progress and making investments in staff capacity on disability inclusion. While noting the intention is to strengthen rather than proliferate structures, the HLCM Chair proposed the establishment of a sub-working group, with thematic leads, under the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion working group of the Human Resources Network, to ensure work on disability inclusion in internal operations continues at pace.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

17. *Requested the Human Resources Network, through its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group, to lead an initiative to advance disability inclusion in an integrated and cross-function manner, in close consultation with the Secretary-General Disability Inclusion Team.*

18. *Delegated the following entities as leads under the initiative: digital accessibility and technology: ITU; conferences, meetings and event services: UN-DGACM; medical and related aspects: UN-Medical Directors Working Group; financial and funding aspects: Co-Chair, Finance and Budget Network, WIPO; benefits/entitlements and adjustments related to disability extra costs: Human Resources Network. In relation to facilities, UNV offered its support to advance work in this area.*

III. Occupational Health and Safety

19. Dr. Sergio Arena, Chair of the UN Medical Directors Working Group (UNMD) and Co-Chair of the HLCM Forum on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS), briefed the Committee on observations concerning occupational health and safety collected during the visits of UNRWA's Palestine refugee camps on Sunday, 2 April.

20. In the visit to a school and health center of a refugee camp, the provision of fire and electrical safety measures, of doors designed for mass evacuation, and of first-aid kits was observed, together with the confirmation that evacuations are drilled regularly, and that bio-hazard waste management follows OHS criteria.

21. These needs had been established in a health and safety assessment, demonstrating that the necessary attention to these aspects was present. These observations therefore confirmed evidence from biennial OHS surveys of organizations that implementation of occupational health and safety measures from the HLCM-adopted OHS framework is progressing steadily and is reaching operations.

22. The Chair of UNMD attributed this progress to a decade-long effort of HLCM that can be marked by five milestones, including the endorsement of the UNMD statement on the need for an OSH policy for UN, the endorsement of the OSH framework in 2015, the establishment of the Task

Force on Duty of Care in high-risk environments, the extension of said Task Force to all risk environments and the establishment of the OHS Forum in 2020. The Chair of UNMD described the UN system as being on the last mile in this decade-long journey to OHS, with the missing pieces being the establishment of a central coordination mechanism to ensure harmonized OHS risk management; and, a framework of accountability for OHS risk management at Headquarter level and its integration with the accountability framework of Resident Coordinators at UN Country Team level.

23. Ms. Françoise Nocquet of WHO, on behalf of the Chair of the OHS Forum, introduced the Committee to the recently finalized and just published Global OHS Repository, a platform including information on health and safety accessible by all UN system personnel. The repository will also be available in French in the near future and is divided in three sections. The first section includes UN-relevant OHS standards that are not prescriptive for UN entities, but constitute recommendations and guidance that organisations can use and adapt to their own context. The second section contains UN system material for establishing an OHS management system and includes documents from the cross-functional Task Force on Duty of Care and the OHS Forum primarily related to risk management and incident reporting, but also to capacity building. It will also be populated in the near future with material and recommendations to Resident Coordinators to support tackling OHS matters in the field. The third and final section is dedicated to the OHS Forum and includes its reports to HLCM and the positions of HLCM on these matters. The direct link to the repository would be soon shared with all CEB entities for them to include in their intranet pages for their respective workforces.

24. In the ensuing discussion, Committee members thanked the OHS Forum for its work so far, expressed appreciation for the resources put at the disposal of the entire UN system, and for the efforts to further capacity building in the future. Members highlighted the centrality of Resident Coordinators and the Development Cooperation Office in the implementation of the OHS Framework in operational contexts. The Global OHS Repository was greeted with keen interest and its further promotion among all staff was encouraged. Staff Federations commended the inclusive way of working in the OHS Forum which ensured contributions from all stakeholders were valued and taken into account, and suggested that this way of working could be seen as best practice for other HLCM bodies.

25. In closing the item, the HLCM Vice-Chair thanked the presenters and the co-chairs of the OHS Forum for their efforts, encouraged all entities to take part in the forthcoming 2023 OHS survey, asked the OHS Forum to explore further channels for the promotion of the OHS Repository and looked forward to the Committee receiving a paper including options for a centralized mechanism on OHS at its next meeting in fall 2023.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

26. *Took note of the progress made in the implementation of the 2023 action plan of the HLCM Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Forum.*

27. *Endorsed the OHS Forum 5ᵗʰ Activity Report.*

28. *Encouraged member organizations to participate in the 2023 OSH survey.*

29. *Encouraged member organizations to communicate the link to the Global OHS Repository to their staff, in particular on their respective OHS-related intranet pages.*

30. Requested the OHS Forum to produce a proposal by the Committee's 46th session in fall 2023 with options with respect to:

- o *Central Coordination mechanism to ensure harmonized OHS risk management across the UN System.*
- o *Framework of Accountability for OHS risk management at organizational level, and its integration with the accountability framework of Resident Coordinators at UN Country Team level.*

IV.   Towards a More Diverse and Inclusive UN System

31. The HLCM Chair recalled that building on the work of the Secretary-General's Task Force on Addressing Racism and Promoting Dignity for All in the United Nations, HLCM agreed in April 2022 to take a common approach in addressing racism and racial discrimination in the United Nations system, using the Secretary General's Strategic Action Plan as a baseline for coordination and collaboration among the organizations. HLCM established a timebound multidisciplinary Group of Focal Points on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) consisting of diversity experts to deliver on a Glossary, Principles and Best Practices, led by the HR Network.

32. The Co-Chair of the HR Network and Co-Chair of the Working Group briefed the Committee on the progress made and asked HLCM for feedback on the final DEI Glossary, draft Principles and draft Collection of Best Practices, indicating that the Group would work towards presenting final products and a monitoring mechanism for the living DEI Glossary at the next session of HLCM.

33. The HLCM Chair thanked the Co-Chairs, the members of the Working Group and the Staff Federations for their work, commending the progress made.

34. During the ensuing discussion on the DEI Glossary, several members highlighted the nature of the Glossary as an internal guiding and legally non-binding instrument. It was further deemed useful to consider some recent recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit relating to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. The Group may explore how definitions can be aligned to streamline statistics and analytics, in particular relating to race and nationality. The Chair of UNMD also asked to review the definition of Disability, to align it to the UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities.

35. Members of the Committee welcomed the draft DEI Principles as a document that can guide and streamline common approaches on policies. Several members provided concrete suggestions on how to categorize and present the draft Principles differently, striving for a more user-friendly document.

36. Related to the collection of best practices, members of the Committee reflected on the work made under the UN system-wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP) for gender equality and the empowerment of women (2.0), and inquired how this will be used to complement the best practices collection on DEI. Several members shared concrete suggestions that they would submit in writing to the Group. The Committee expressed its appreciation for the timely delivery of high-quality products and looked forward to the delivery of the final products at its next session.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

37. *Took note of the progress made and commended the HLCM Working Group on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) on the work done.*

38. *Adopted the final version of the UN System DEI Glossary, noting that it will remain a living document. The Committee further noted that the Glossary can be used by member organizations in accordance with their respective exigencies and business models, and agreed to revisit the definition of Disability accounting for the definition provided in the UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities.*

39. *Looked forward to receiving the final version of the DEI Principles and of the collection of best practices at its next session.*

V.   Addressing Sexual Harassment in the UN System

40. The HLCM Vice-Chair and Chair of the CEB Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment in the Organizations of the UN System (Task Force), Kelly T. Clements, noted that the Task Force continued its work at a rapid pace and thanked all entities for their support and resources devoted to this matter. She updated the Committee on the highlights of ongoing efforts of the Task Force to prevent and address sexual harassment within the UN system under its current third phase of work and structured in four workstreams.

41. The first workstream dedicated to prevention of sexual harassment and behavioural science led by IOM and the UN Secretariat was moving work forward on common standards for trainings and communications, as well as the development of monitoring tools to measure if behaviours are being changed by the tools created to this end. The second stream led by the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the World Bank Group and concerned with victim engagement and support had launched a training module on the rights and dignities of victims of both sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, which is available for the use of UN system entities. The third workstream on data and results led by WFP and the UN Secretariat is in the process of developing a results framework with forward thinking indicators of good practice to encourage policy progress by suggesting innovative ways to address sexual harassment. The fourth workstream led by UN Women and OCHA and a focus on enhanced cooperation was nearing completion of a public knowledge hub hosting products from across the UN system to further prevention and response to sexual harassment. The Chair of the Task Force noted that the work of the third phase was scheduled to be finalized by the end of 2023.

42. Noting the importance of periodically assessing if structures are still delivering what they were designed to do, the Chair emphasised that the Task Force was initially created as a time-bound one-year effort. Underscoring the consensus within the Task Force that there was a clear need to continue coordination on addressing sexual harassment at the UN system-wide level, she mentioned the proposal developed through the Task Force for a mechanism to succeed it and sustainably uphold zero tolerance for inaction on the behaviour.

43. Ms. Clements presented the proposal, outlining the four identified primary functions that such a structure needed to fulfil: coordinating a system-wide approach; monitoring of progress and impact evaluation; capacity building; and communication and engagement with relevant stakeholders. While the proposal sketched out the objectives and functions, it also gave a non-exhaustive list of ideas for areas of system-wide work, deliberately leaving the detailed design and prioritization for the succession mechanism for the next phase of drafting the terms of reference.

44. The Chair noted an element in the proposal before the Committee, concerning the name of the structure: after further consultations close to the HLCM meeting, the proposed name of the new structure was UN Executive Group to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment in the UN System. This designation was chosen to reflect the high-level nature of the mechanism as well as the sense of urgency attached to the matter. The Chair of the Task Force invited HLCM to share their comments and suggestions regarding the proposal and encouraged the Committee to endorse it for further action by the Task Force and the HLCM Secretariat.

45. In the subsequent discussion, members of the Committee expressed their appreciation for the progression of the work of the Task Force and encouraged its continuation until the end of the third phase of work. Members underscored the seriousness of sexual harassment for victims and the high priority they attach to the issue. Support was voiced for the establishment of the UN Executive Group to sustainably address sexual harassment at the system-wide level, including with the four outlined priority functions. Members were looking forward to receiving the terms of reference.

46. It was noted that the Office of the Victims' Rights Advocate and the Office of the Special Coordinator on improving the UN response to sexual exploitation and abuse should be part of the Executive Group, and that the inclusion of Staff Federations should be considered. While some commented on a possible extension of the effort to other forms of harassment and misconduct, it was cautioned that the specific focus on sexual harassment was deliberate and that these tailored efforts were required to advance swiftly.

47. The Chair of the Task Force thanked Committee members for their comments and broad support for the way forward, and committed to take observations into account during the drafting phase of the terms of reference.

48. At the conclusion of the item UNHCR offered a presentation of their pilot project, Not Only Me, which provides a platform to persons that have experienced sexual harassment to enter information about the perpetrator without triggering an official process. The victim will only get notified if another person entered the same perpetrator in the escrow system. This mechanism leaves the full control to the victim, who also has the option of being connected to a victim care officer throughout the experience. More information on the project was offered to interested HLCM members.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

49. *Took note with appreciation of the progress update on recent work of the CEB Task Force and its workstreams.*

50. *Renewed its commitment to collectively addressing sexual harassment within the UN system.*

51. *Endorsed, for the Secretary-General's review and decision, the establishment of a UN Executive Group to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Harassment in the UN System, which would succeed the Task Force upon its conclusion in late 2023.*

52. *Endorsed the application of a coordinated system-wide approach to sexual harassment prevention and response, monitoring of progress and impact evaluation, capacity building, and communication and engagement with relevant stakeholders, as priority objectives of the UN Executive Group.*

53. *Requested the Task Force and the HLCM Secretariat to start preparations for the set-up of the UN Executive Group, including by developing terms of reference to be submitted to the Committee's 46th session in fall 2023.*

VI. Mainstreaming Mutual Recognition

54. With the aim of maximizing economies of scale and driving efficiency gains and in close cooperation with UNSDG-BIG, HCLM decided at its October 2022 session to strengthen the coordination between the different strands that support the operationalization of Mutual Recognition, through: 1) the development/ revision of management policies to address bottlenecks in the application of Mutual Recognition principles as identified by relevant reform streams; and, 2) the formulation of common comprehensive operational guidance on Mutual Recognition that can be shared with entities and also disseminated to country/field offices.

55. The Committee discussed the draft Terms of Reference prepared by the HLCM Coordination Group on Mutual Recognition that had been established in response to HLCM's mandate at its October 2022 session, the Model Communication for an Awareness Campaign on Mutual Recognition that had been developed by the Procurement Network, and the Statement on Mutual Recognition recently released by the UN Representatives of Internal Audit Services (UN-RIAS).

56. HLCM members emphasized the need to identify and remove implementation bottlenecks and suggested that a short list be compiled for priority attention. In addition, members requested coordinated development of internal guidance to advance the operationalization of Mutual Recognition, which considers other (non-procurement) functions, such as ICT. Members conveyed their appreciation to the Coordination Group for their work in advancing this important issue.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

57. *Approved the Terms of Reference of the HLCM Coordination Group on Mutual Recognition, emphasizing the supporting role of HLCM and the Model Communication for an Awareness Campaign on Mutual Recognition.*

58. *Took note with appreciation the UN-RIAS Statement on Mutual Recognition.*

59. *Emphasized the need to identify and remove implementation bottlenecks and suggested a shortlist be compiled for priority attention.*

60. *Requested coordinated development of internal guidance to advance the operationalization of Mutual Recognition, which considers other (non-procurement) functions, such as ICT.*

61. *Took note with appreciation of the DTN Concept Note on Mutual Recognition and the formation of an ICT working group to advance the topic.*

VII.   Sustainability Practices in UN Operations

62. Introducing this session, the HLCM Vice-Chair underlined that despite many efforts across agencies, the UN system still emitted 1.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide (CO_2) in 2021. Only 22% of the electricity that was consumed by the UN system in 2021 came from renewable sources.

63. In response to the Secretary-General's call to action to 'Greening the Blue,' multiple UN agencies were engaging in a series of innovative initiatives in the area of sustainability of operations.

64. The objective of this session was to provide an opportunity for an initial exchange on some of the important greening efforts in the context of the Greening the Blue initiative facilitated by UNEP, as well as to agree on a way forward for a deeper exchange on best practices.

65. Mr. Hans Baritt and Mr. Dominic Grace introduced five sustainable initiatives recently launched by UNHCR: Green Box and Data; Green Financing Facility; Fleet; Green Travel; and, Green Awareness & Behaviours. These projects were aimed at collecting accurate and consistent data on global energy consumption through automated energy meters, for future reporting and decision making; at rightsizing and right-profiling of - electric and hybrid - vehicles, life-cycle management and ridesharing; and, at reducing air travel and encouraging travels by train.

66. HLCM members were invited to join a series of inter-agency workshops to exchange experiences on efforts to reduce entities' CO_2 emissions and to identify possible collaboration opportunities across agencies.

67. HLCM members expressed their appreciation for the work performed by UNHCR and shared their own experiences on sustainability initiatives in the area of waste management, control of water and electricity consumption, usage of renewable energy and other sustainable technologies for the management of facilities. The idea to conduct a series of workshops was strongly supported.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

68. *Took note, with appreciation, of the presentation on sustainability initiatives by UNHCR, and of the examples provided by HLCM members of efforts towards reducing CO2 emissions.*

69. *Recalled with appreciation the work already being carried out by the UN Environment Management Group in this area.*

70. *Expressed support for the proposal from UNHCR to organize an inter-agency workshop series starting in the third to fourth quarter of 2023, with partners. The workshops would focus on greening of fleet, travel, and buildings, to share learnings and best practices as well as to identify potential collaboration opportunities.*

VIII.   UN Digital ID

71. The UN Digital ID initiative was launched by HLCM in 2021, with the aim to solve data fragmentation and data transportability across United Nations organizations, and as a key enabler for the simplification and streamlining of processes and transactions across all business functions. At its core, the UN Digital ID would be a unique identity for each member of UN personnel, from on-boarding through retirement. During 2022, the project governance was defined and the recruitment for the project team finalized. An initial business scenario (staff onboarding) was selected as the first priority for the initiative.

72. HLCM members were provided with the state-of-play on the UN Digital ID programme. The session was opened by the Chair of the HLCM and Executive Sponsor of the UN Digital ID Programme, followed by a presentation by the newly appointed Director of the UN Digital ID Programme on the governance model and programme milestones that have been achieved so far.

73. Programme highlights included the identification of business scenarios and aligning on IT delivery that is underpinned by data security and protection measures.

74. In the discussions, HLCM members emphasized the importance of digital accessibility, cybersecurity, data protection and stakeholder engagement, and there was enthusiasm and broad support for the UN Digital ID programme. The staff Federations stressed the need to ensure that staff members clearly understood how their personal data would be protected and encouraged a communication strategy in this regard.

75. The next steps for the programme included developing a minimum viable product and operating model, with support mechanisms, change management, communications, and scalability plans. In closing, the HLCM Chair reiterated that change management was a key component of the programme and that a strategy was currently being developed for approval by the Executive Steering Committee.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

76. *Took note with appreciation of the progress to date and of the next steps for the UN Digital ID programme, including the development of a minimum viable product and operating model, with support mechanisms, change management, communications, and scalability plans.*

77. *Emphasized the importance of digital accessibility, cybersecurity, data protection and stakeholder engagement.*

IX.   Impact of Emerging Artificial Intelligence Technologies on UN Business Models

78. The HLCM Vice-Chair briefed the Committee on discussions during the Secretary-General's Senior Management Group meeting in late March on the significant inflection point for generative Artificial Intelligence as a result of recent breakthroughs in this field, including potential benefits, risks and implications. Notable guest speakers at that meeting included the CEO of Open-AI, the company behind Chat-GPT, as well as leading scientists and experts in the field.

79. The SMG was also presented with the highlights from the 2023 AI Index produced by the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence (HAI), which aim to inform decision-makers about trends in the field of AI, including in areas of technical performance, ethics, financing and investment, and education.

The High-Level Committee on Management:

80. Agreed that a dedicated session on emerging AI technologies, including generative artificial intelligence, its risks and benefits, the impact on the work of the United Nations, and the United Nations' role in adopting and leading on AI for good, would be organized at the 46th HLCM session as a joint session with HLCP.

81. Took note that special discussions on recent advancements in AI would be organized in May by the Digital & Technology Network (DTN) and in July by the Finance and Budget Network (FBN), and would be open to virtual participation by other HLCM Networks.

X.   Any other business

Comprehensive Review of Compensation and Allowances System

82. The ICSC Vice-Chair briefed the Committee about the UN General Assembly's mandate for the International Civil Service Commission to conduct a Comprehensive Review of Compensation and Allowances System.

Dates and venue of the next session

83. HLCM accepted with appreciation the kind offer by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to host the Committee's 46th session on 4-6 October 2023, in Copenhagen.

Annex I

List of Participants

HLCM Chair: Catherine Pollard (Under-Secretary-General for Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance, UN)

HLCM Vice-Chair: Kelly T. Clements (Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR)

HLCM Secretary: Remo Lalli (CEB Secretariat)

CEB Secretary: Maaike Jansen (CEB Secretariat)

Organization	*Participant*
United Nations	
Department of Safety and Security	Unaisi Lutu Vuniwaqa
Office of Human Resources	Martha Helena Lopez
Department of General Assembly and Conference Management	Cherith Norman Chalet
Department of Operational Support	Arnab Roy
Executive Office of the Secretary-General	Karen Lock
Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance	Christophe Monier *(via Teams)*
International Labour Organization	Hao Bin
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Laurent Thomas
	Maurizio Martina
	Aiman Hija
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Nick Jeffreys
International Civil Aviation Organization	Arun Mishra
World Health Organization	Françoise Nocquet *(via Teams)*
	Angela Kastner *(via Teams)*
International Organization for Migration	Joseph Appiah
	Dyane Epstein
International Telecommunication Union	Diego Ruiz
World Meteorological Organization	Maja Drazenovic-Carrieri
	Anthony Duncker
International Maritime Organization	Azara Prempeh
	Richard Greenwood

Organization	Participant
World Intellectual Property Organization	Chitra Narayanaswamy
	Linda Kaseva
International Fund for Agricultural Development	Guoqi Wu
	Giorgia Salucci
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Cecilia Ugaz Estrada
International Atomic Energy Agency	Margaret Doane
	Mariela Fogante
United Nations Development Programme	David Bearfield
United Nations Environment Programme	Sonja Leighton-Kone
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Catty Bennet Sattler
	Hans Baritt *(via Teams)*
	Dominic Grace *(via Teams)*
	Nadia Abu Amr *(via Teams)*
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Leni Stenseth
United Nations Children's Fund	Hannan Sulieman
United Nations Population Fund	Ib Petersen
World Food Programme	Sergio Arena
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime/United Nations Office at Vienna	Dennis Thatchaichawalit
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)	Stephen Slawsky
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)	Moez Doraid
United Nations Office for Project Services	Raad Gilyana
World Bank	Maria Dimitriadou
International Monetary Fund	Brian Christensen
World Trade Organization	Alison Holmes
Other representatives:	
International Trade Centre	Nasser Shammout
United Nations Volunteers	Toily Kurbanov
International Criminal Court	Ivan Alippi

Organization	Participant
International Civil Service Commission	Boguslaw Winid
	Regina Pawlik
Federation of International Civil Servants Associations	Tanya Quinn-Maguire
Coordinating Committee for International Staff Associations and Unions of the United Nations System	Géraldine Danhoui
United Nations International Civil Servants Federation	Michael Lund
	Aitor Arauz
Young United Nations Network	Kamila Karimova
Guests:	
Higher Council for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al-Hussein
International Disability Alliance	Jose Maria Viera
Microsoft	Hector Minto *(via Teams)*
UN Representatives of Internal Audit Services	Mika Tapio
UN Representatives of Investigation Services	Sangwoo Kim

Annex II

List of Documents

	Title/description	Summary sheet	Document symbol
	Revised Provisional Agenda		CEB/2023/HLCM/1/Rev.3
A	Concept Note prepared in consultation with EOSG Disability Team	Yes	CEB/2023/HLCM/2
	Best Practices on Accessibility in UN Meetings (UN-DGACM)		CEB/2023/HLCM/10
	SAP Multimedia Content – Autism at Work Program		n.a.
B	Report from the HLCM Forum on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) with Annexes	Yes	CEB/2023/HLCM/3
	Run of Show - Occupational Health & Safety in UNRWA Refugee Camps		CEB/2023/HLCM/3/Add.1
C	Update from the Multidisciplinary Group on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	Yes	CEB/2023/HLCM/4
	Annexes: *(not for printing)* 1. Glossary 2. Vision and Principles 3. Good Practices		CEB/2023/HLCM/4/Add.1
D	Report from the CEB Task Force on Addressing Sexual Harassment	Yes	CEB/2023/HLCM/5
E	Draft Terms of Reference - HLCM Coordination Group on Mutual Recognition	Yes	CEB/2023/HLCM/6/Rev.1
	Model Communication for an Awareness Campaign on MR		CEB/2023/HLCM/7
	UN-RIAS Statement on Mutual Recognition		n.a.
	Concept Note - Mutual Recognition in the Area of ICT		CEB/2023/HLCM/14
F.1	Concept Note - Greening & Sustainability in UN Operations	Yes	CEB/2023/HLCM/11
F.2	Project Report – UN Digital ID initiative	n.a.	CEB/2023/HLCM/8
F.3	Generative AI – Highlights of 2023 AI Index (SMG, 21 March 2023)	n.a.	n.a.
	Video link: The Future of Work with AI - Microsoft March 2023 Event - Bing video		n.a.

	Title/description	*Summary sheet*	*Document symbol*
G	2018-2023 UN System Workplace Mental Health and Well-being Strategy + 2024 and beyond - Progress Report	n.a.	CEB/2023/HLCM/12
	Update on the HLCM Cross-functional Working Group for Data and Cyber Risk with Annexes		CEB/2023/HLCM/13
H	Discussion Paper - Considerations for audit and investigation clauses in UN funding agreements with donors – KEY PRINCIPLES	Yes	CEB/2023/HLCM/9