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Organización
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Организация
Объединенных Наций по
вопросам образования,
науки и культуры

منظمة الأمم المتحدة
للتربية والعلم والثقافة

联合国教育、
科学及文化组织

**Address by Irina Bokova,
Director-General of UNESCO
on the occasion of the HLCM Meeting**

London, 5 October 2015

Dear Members of the High Level Committee of Management,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me thank the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for hosting us and for graciously putting at our disposal such wonderful facilities.

The last time we met in Paris we were at the cusp of change towards the Post-2015 development agenda - or the 2030 agenda I should say.

As of last week, we are already there.

Our responsibility, as Member of the United Nations System, is to strengthen the institutional alignment of our structures with the 2030 agenda adopted by Member States. The current UN General Assembly and the political debates on the role of UN family with regards to conflict, humanitarian and refugee disasters, eradication of poverty and tackling climate change call for a need for a transformative developmental action which requires from all of us the ability to change, to modernise, to become cost effective and to deliver.

We have to give and implant a sense of purpose and mission in all our UN work. This is precisely what millions of people expect from us. Making the change, understanding and upholding the different mandates with the aim of serving people is the best proof of us being relevant.

We must consider the provision of financial resources across the system to align promise with performance, and this is why I had, in Paris, appealed for us to be bold, to consider transformative change ideas across the mandate of the HLCM.

This meetings programme of work allows us ample opportunity to do that.

The reference point for our HLCM's engagement in transformative actions of the UN system is to answer to the question "what we need to deliver".

The ambitious 17 sustainable development aim to strengthen our collective ability to drive impact.

We have underlined the need to pursue the strategic repositioning of the organizations of the UN system on the management and operational sides concurrently with the substantive and programmatic one.

This is critical so as not to risk a disconnect between the goals and the means, and it is in that context that we should delve into the thematic discussion that we will have on the UN System's Operational Fit for the SDG's.

What are the system-wide actions that we should further put in place to establish operational modalities to deliver both globally and locally?

We have talked about a Joint Operations Facility platform.

Some of us have put in place and others are exploring Global Service Centers for consolidating service provisions.

We have had successes in joint procurement, in currency management – how do we continue to bring this forward?

Do we broaden our scope and ambition?

For instance, knowing the cost challenges across the UN system, how do we focus on operating costs, continue to leverage commonalities?

As we have set the stage, there is no going back - "change is the only constant".

Any business operations, any business processes will require much stronger information systems to support them.

And this is a key aspect of the 2030 Agenda, which will require a very strong scientific, statistical, information and knowledge based management.

Herein, the findings of the ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) inter-operability study are crucial.

It is also important that we bring into these discussions the progress report with global service delivery solutions in the UN System and take it forward.

Along with the operational modalities, we have in our own transformative change agenda underlined the need to promote a common sense of purpose through a high performing international civil service.

We are the face of the international public service and collectively, we have the responsibility and I weigh my words, to take a strategic view on the outcome of the ICSC review of the UN system compensation package that we will be discussing in this meeting.

The ICSC just concluded its comprehensive review of staff compensation for professional staff, the first time in 25 years.

The request of Member States was to make it simpler, modern and cost effective.

The package is definitely an improvement over the existing one and is a good first step towards modernising while still remaining generous and comprehensive towards staff.

We, as a system should respond positively to the recommendations, while working with the ICSC on some areas of adjustment in keeping the main thrust of the intended reform and change.

It is certainly not easy to redesign a system that has to be applicable to various organizations with different mandates and needs.

While certain aspects of the proposed system seem more transparent, easier to administer and simplified, on certain other aspects there seem to be changes that may not be entirely beneficial.

We, however, have to take a broadminded, dispassionate, well thought-out and practical view of this matter which will be a crucial enabler of our capacity to deliver on the 2030 development agenda.

So, Ladies and Gentlemen, we have some very important tasks ahead of us today and tomorrow, so let us get down to business.

But just before, I take this opportunity to thank the Vice-Chair, Ms. Jan Beagle, for her support in preparing this meeting, for which I am deeply grateful.