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SEMINAR
ON
RESULTS BASED BUDGETING:
OBJECTIVES, EXPECTED RESULTS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Strasbourg, 25 September 2012

Opening by Ambassador Gediminas SERKSNYŠ

Check against delivery

Dear Deputy Secretary General,
Dear Chair of the Budget Committee,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very pleased to attend this Seminar on behalf of the Rapporteur Group on Programme, Budget and Administration of the Committee of Ministers. The Committee of Ministers has always given high importance to the effectiveness of budgeting process.

I would like to remind you, that 15 years ago, in 1997, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan launched a comprehensive reform initiative and proposed shifting from programme budgeting to results-based budgeting (RBB). This was a significant shift in budgeting techniques in the United Nations. Since the 1990s, the major Specialized Agencies of the United Nations system such as World Bank, WHO, UNESCO, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have adopted results-based or performance-based budgeting systems.

Someone could ask: what is the results-based budgeting?

Organizations define RBB in different ways; however all definitions revolve around the concept of aligning resources behind results.

RBB is a results-driven budgeting process in which:

- programme formulation and resources justification involve a set of predefined objectives, expected results, outputs, inputs and performance indicators which constitute a 'logical framework';
- expected results justify resource requirements, which are derived from - and linked to - outputs to be delivered, with a view to achieving such results; and
- actual performance in achieving results is measured by predefined performance indicators.

From RBB point of view, the Council of Europe must to identify strategic choices by setting clear objectives and expected results, as well as relevant performance indicators, for its Programme and Budget, and ensure the effective use of human and financial resources of the Organisation, especially in the context of the current economic crisis, which affects most of our member States.

As already underlined by the Deputy Secretary General], the current reform of the Council of Europe has seen substantial progress in this area, notably with the introduction of a more strategic Programme and Budget, which now contains fewer and more focused programme lines, and spans two years.

The Programme and Budget document is now a single document, which makes it easier for any reader or stakeholder to understand *what* the Organisation does, *why* it does it, *how* it does it, and the resources provided for it.

The Committee of Ministers considers that this approach shows significant progress, and provides a better basis for its decision-making. The Committee of Ministers also welcomes improvements in the progress review reports. In particular, the reference to “what went well” and “what did not go well” is considered as a useful indicator by delegations.

Obviously, nothing is ever perfect, and improvements can still be made. On several occasions, delegations have underlined that they would wish to see improvements in the expected results and performance indicators. Of course, I am not saying that this will be an easy task.

In this regard, I am confident that this Seminar, through a useful exchange of best practices, will help us to understand the kind of objectives, expected results and performance indicators which are adapted to this Organisation.

This Seminar will also, I am certain, contribute to further improve the quality of our Programme and Budget in the future. I would therefore like to thank the Budget Committee for having taken the initiative to organise it, with the support of the Directorate of Programme, Finance and Linguistic Services.

I wish you all a successful Seminar.