



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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Agenda item 47, 113, 116, 117, 122, 123, 124, 132 and 149: Procurement Reform
Statement by Hitoshi Kozaki, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

1. Procurement reform is crucial for the Organization. Any instances of fraud not only severely damage the reputation of the Organization, but also make it quite difficult for the Government of Member States to make the case for contributing to it. For its part, the Government of Japan is obligated to ensure its taxpayers that its assessed contributions to the Organization are utilized in a transparent, accountable and efficient manner.
2. The volume of procurement in the United Nations has risen over the last few years. In 2005 the total was in excess of 1.8 billion US dollars, a sharp increase from 2002 when it stood at 1 billion US dollars. We are also cognizant of the recent surge in peacekeeping operations. The weaknesses in the internal control framework in the Secretariat, which were pointed out in the OIOS and other relevant reports, need to be remedied without delay.
3. The report of the Secretary-General attempts to address those weaknesses, including the proposed changes to current process related to exigency provision and vendor review process, for example. We are open to considering possible changes in the procurement procedure and the financial rules and regulations if we are given assurance that they would enhance transparency, accountability and efficiency. As field operations are carried out in difficult environments and under a tight schedule, and therefore under higher risk than headquarters activities, we would like to examine whether persuasive arguments are made to ensure that the specific measures to be taken would improve the internal control and proper oversight mechanism, particularly in the field.
4. We are keenly interested in seeing that the internal control mechanism is strengthened, the lines of responsibility and accountability clarified, measures taken to prevent the recurrence of fraud, and procurement procedures improved.
5. My delegation will participate constructively in these deliberations to ensure that their outcome will serve the best interest of Member States as well as of the United Nations.