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**Executive Board  
Second Regular Session**

**Rome, 9–13 November 2009**

## **RESOURCE, FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY MATTERS**

**Agenda item 5**

*For information\**

# **E**

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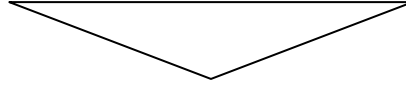
## **PROCESS FOR THE SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF THE WFP EXTERNAL AUDITOR FOR THE TERM FROM 1 JULY 2010 TO 30 JUNE 2016**

On 22 September 2009 the document was sent to Board members for vote by correspondence. Of the 36 Board members, 30 voted “yes” and 6 abstained. Approval was obtained on 6 October 2009.

\* In accordance with the Executive Board’s decisions on governance, approved at the Annual and Third Regular Sessions, 2000, items for information should not be discussed unless a Board member specifically requests it, well in advance of the meeting, and the Chair accepts the request on the grounds that it is a proper use of the Board’s time.

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## DECISION



On 6 October 2009, the Board approved the proposed “Process for the Selection and Appointment of the WFP External Auditor for the term from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2016” (WFP/EB.2/2009/5-E/1).

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## BACKGROUND

1. At its Annual Session in June 2009, the Executive Board requested the Bureau to develop a recommendation on the arrangements for the appointment of the External Auditor and to submit it at an informal consultation of the Board after receiving the advice of the Audit Committee, the FAO Finance Committee and the United Nations Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).
2. The Board further requested the Bureau to submit to it, after considering inputs provided during the informal consultation, the final text of the recommendation for approval by correspondence. Approval will occur under the procedure that is laid out in Rule IX.8 of the Rules of Procedure, modified to allow the Bureau to perform the functions that are otherwise attributed in that Rule to the Executive Director, *mutatis mutandis*.
3. This paper sets out: i) the timeframe of the process; ii) the mandate and composition of the Evaluation Panel and arrangements for its continuity; iii) the selection procedure; and iv) the criteria for evaluation, with relative rating weights. The functions of the Audit Committee will be to “advise and make recommendations to the Executive Board in relation to the arrangements for the appointment of the External Auditor under the Financial Regulations”, as stated in document WFP/EB.1/2009/6-B/1, Annex 1.
4. The purpose of this paper is to regulate the process for the selection of the WFP External Auditor for the term from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2016.

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## RELEVANT PROVISIONS IN THE WFP FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

5. The following WFP Financial Regulations are relevant to the appointment of the External Auditor:
  - **Financial Regulation 14.1:** The Board shall appoint an External Auditor to perform the audit of the accounts of WFP. The External Auditor shall be the Auditor-General (or official holding the equivalent title) of a State Member of the United Nations or FAO.
  - **Financial Regulation 14.2:** The External Auditor shall be appointed through a competitive selection process for a non-renewable six-year term. Another appointment may be possible after a break of at least one term.

## TIMEFRAME

6. The term of office of the new External Auditor will start on 1 July 2010, upon conclusion of the current External Auditor's mandate. Therefore, the appointment of the External Auditor is scheduled to occur at the First Regular Session of the Board in February 2010. In order to meet this timeline, the Bureau recommends the following timeframe:

Milestone events	Time-frame
* Approval of the selection process by the Board	Early October 2009
* Invitation for proposals (with 10 weeks deadline to reply)	Early October 2009
* Receipt of proposals	Mid-December 2009
* Short-listing of proposals	Late December 2009
* Interviews of short-listed candidates	Early January 2010
* Final evaluation and recommendation	Mid-January 2010
* Solicitation of comments from FAO Finance Committee and ACABQ	Early February 2010
Appointment by the Board	February 2010 First Regular Session

## EVALUATION PANEL

### Mandate of the Evaluation Panel

7. The process for the selection of the External Auditor will be carried out by the Evaluation Panel, which will have the overall responsibility to: i) initiate and oversee the competitive selection process; ii) evaluate the qualifying proposals received; and iii) present to the Board the results of the selection process together with its evaluation and recommendation.

### Composition of the Evaluation Panel

8. For the purpose of the selection process of the External Auditor, the Board will constitute the Bureau elected for the year 2009 into the Evaluation Panel.

9. The Evaluation Panel will therefore comprise the following members:

President	Mr Vladimir V. Kuznetsov (Russian Federation, List E)
Vice President	H.E. José Antônio Marcôndes de Carvalho (Brazil, List C)
Member	Mr Kiala Kia Mateva (Angola, List A)
Member	Mr Noel D. de Luna (Philippines, List B)
Member	H.E. James Alexander Harvey (United Kingdom, List D)



10. The President of the Bureau will act as Chair of the Evaluation Panel. In the event that the President of the Bureau is unable to chair, his functions will be assumed by the Vice President.
11. If any member of the Evaluation Panel is unable to carry out his/her functions, his/her alternate member in the Bureau will substitute him/her. The 2009 Bureau members, and their alternates, shall serve in their individual capacity.
12. As regard to the proceedings of the meetings of the Evaluation Panel, the majority of the members of the Evaluation Panel shall constitute the quorum.

### Continuity of the Evaluation Panel

13. In accordance with the timeframe set under paragraph 6, the selection and appointment process shall be completed at the First Regular Session of the Executive Board in February 2010.
14. However, the Evaluation Panel will continue to function in its original composition even beyond that date, if the completion of the selection process so requires.

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## SELECTION PROCEDURE

15. **Stage 1: Preparation of the Request for Proposals.** The Request for Proposals will be prepared by the relevant technical divisions from the WFP Secretariat and reviewed by the Audit Committee for further review and approval by the Evaluation Panel.

**Stage 2: Invitation.** Based on the above, the Evaluation Panel will invite eligible External Auditors to submit separate technical and financial proposals for the audit of WFP's financial statements for the period 2010–2015. The External Auditors eligible are the Auditors-General or officials holding equivalent title of States Members of the United Nations or FAO.

**Stage 3: Receipt, Opening and Preliminary Evaluation of Technical Proposals.** The receipt and opening of proposals will be performed in accordance with existing WFP tender receipt and opening procedures. A WFP Technical Group composed of representatives of the WFP audit, procurement and finance offices will screen and perform a preliminary evaluation of the technical proposals, clearly identifying those that do not meet essential criteria.

**Stage 4: Evaluation by the Evaluation Panel and Review by the Audit Committee.** The above package will be transmitted to the Evaluation Panel, which will pass it on to the Audit Committee for its review and comments. Upon receipt of the comments of the Audit Committee, the Evaluation Panel will evaluate, award total scores and produce a short list of candidates.

**Stage 5: Opening of Financial Proposals.** After clearance by the Evaluation Panel, the WFP Technical Group will open the financial proposals of the short-listed candidates, conduct a basic analysis to provide comparative data and transmit them directly to the Evaluation Panel.

**Stage 6: Interviews of Short-Listed Candidates.** Short-listed candidates will be interviewed by the Evaluation Panel, which will be assisted in its task by the Audit Committee, including formulation of a standard set of areas to cover and questions.

On the basis of the total score awarded and of the results of the interviews, the Evaluation Panel will make its final evaluation and recommend a preferred candidate.



**Stage 7: Solicitation of Comments from the Advisory Bodies.** The report of the work of the Evaluation Panel, including its final evaluation and recommendation of a candidate, will be submitted to the FAO Finance Committee and the ACABQ for comments.

**Stage 8: Appointment.** The Evaluation Panel will present to the Board its final evaluation and recommendation of a preferred candidate. The Board will also have available the comments and advice from the advisory bodies. The Board will appoint the External Auditor.

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## CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

16. The selection criteria recommended for the selection of the External Auditor in 2010–2016 are as follows:

- **Integrity:** adherence to a code of professional and ethical conduct applied to all staff and reviewed and updated at least annually. This is an essential prerequisite that candidates must meet fully in order to be considered further by the Evaluation Panel.
- **Objectivity:** objectivity in the discharge of duties and responsibilities. This is an essential prerequisite that candidates must meet fully in order to be considered further by the Evaluation Panel.
- **Qualifications of Officials and Staff:** conformity to the auditing standards of the United Nations Panel of External Auditors and ethics governing their work; professional qualifications, skills, and size of work force; membership in internationally recognized accounting or auditing bodies such as the International Organization of the Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC), etc.; and proficiency in English and ability to work in other WFP official languages, on an as-needed basis.
- **Training and Experience:** existence of a programme for a continuing professional education for staff; experience in the audit of United Nations organizations or national public sector organizations or international non-governmental organizations; familiarity with the audit of financial statements prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS); and staff well trained in current trends of auditing and with extensive audit experience.
- **Audit Approach and Strategy:** comprehensive work plans to ensure comprehensive audit coverage of all WFP resources; performance of financial and compliance audits as well as economy, efficiency and value-for-money audits; proposed approach to external audit staffing of WFP to minimize compliance costs to WFP; collaboration with WFP's internal audit to optimize the use of limited audit resources; and delivery of audit results.
- **Quality Control:** a well-functioning internal quality review process and exposure to external INTOSAI review.
- **Communications:** timely communication of audit results presented to management through comprehensive management letters, audit reports and meetings, as necessary. Communications should be tailored according to the audience. The audit reports should be presented within the United Nations deadlines.
- **Cost:** the most competitive overall cost package.



## RATING SYSTEM OF CRITERIA

17. The proposals will be assessed against the specific criteria defined under paragraph 16 using a score scale from 1 to 5 (1 – meets none of the criteria, and 5 – fully meets the criteria). Scores will be assigned for each criterion based on the replies to the Request for Proposals completed by the invited State Auditors.
18. Each criterion will be given a specific weight (totalling 100 percent) to measure its relative importance or relevance to the overall competency, as indicated below:

	Rating weight (%)
- Qualifications of officials and staff	15
- Training and experience	20
- Audit approach and strategy	20
- Quality control	15
- Communications	10
<b>Sub total weight to technical criteria</b>	<b>80</b>
Weight to cost	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

19. For each selection criterion, the Evaluation Panel may define further sub-criteria and assign weights to these if required.
20. The scores for selection criteria will be multiplied by the weight to arrive at a total score for each criterion. The total scores for each criterion will then be added up to arrive at an overall total score obtained by the candidate.
21. A shortlist of candidates with the highest overall scores will be prepared by the Evaluation Panel. The Panel may, if appropriate, adjust the scores after having interviewed the short-listed candidates.
22. The Evaluation Panel will recommend to the Board the candidate with the highest overall score achieved.

**ANNEX****SELECTION OF THE WFP EXTERNAL AUDITOR  
GUIDELINES FOR SCORING OF CRITERIA**

1. As is the case in WFP procurement procedures and practices, the Evaluation Panel will measure the proposals against the specific criteria defined (see paragraph 16), assigning a score scale from 1 to 5 (1 – meets none of the criteria and 5 – fully meets the criteria). Scores will be assigned for each criterion based on the replies to the Request for Proposals completed by the invited State Auditors.
2. For example, a maximum score of 5 could be awarded if all the requirements are fully met. The lowest score of 1 could be awarded if none of the requirements are met.





	Criteria	
<b>TECHNICAL</b>		
<b>Integrity</b>		
	Integrity	<p>Audit institution has a code of professional and ethical conduct applicable to all its staff and this code is frequently updated.</p> <p>Audit institution has clear and documented disciplinary procedures and these are applicable to all audit institution staff in the case of deviation from the code of professional and ethical conduct.</p> <p>Evidence that the audit institution abides by the code of professional and ethical conduct of the institution, such as having staff sign off on yearly compliance statements.</p>

	Criteria	
<b>OBJECTIVITY</b>		
	Objectivity in the discharge of duties and responsibilities	Audit institution work is demonstrably guided and performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

	Score	5—Highest, fully meets criteria
Criteria		
<b>QUALIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND STAFF</b>		
Conformity to the auditing standards of the United Nations Panel of External Auditors and ethics governing their work	Audit institution demonstrates its officers and staff have extensive experience in the performance of work in conformity with auditing standards of the United Nations Panel of External Auditors and ethics governing their work.	
Professional qualifications, skills and size of work force	<p>Audit institution demonstrates it has high number of qualified professional accountant staff (and professional qualification certificates are from an internationally recognized board or standard), including staff with accounting, finance, operations, procurement, transport and information technology audit experience, particularly in client/server applications such as those used by WFP.</p> <p>Audit institution demonstrates it has sufficient and commensurate number of professional staff to ensure adequate audit coverage of all resources of WFP, as well as to maintain any other commitments the institution may have in addition to the audit of WFP.</p> <p>Audit institution demonstrates its staff have relevant skills and experience in the audit of other United Nations agencies, international NGOs, etc.</p>	
Membership in internationally recognized accounting or auditing bodies such as INTOSAI, IFAC	Audit institution demonstrates it is a member of an internationally recognized accounting or auditing body.	
Language proficiency	Audit institution demonstrates it has sufficient number of staff who speak and are proficient in English and that it has the ability to work in other official languages, on an as-needed basis.	

	Criteria	Score 5—Highest, fully meets criteria
<b>TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE</b>		
	Existence of a programme for a continuing professional education for staff	Audit institution professional staff required to attend continuing professional education training of at least two weeks every two years, and the institution demonstrates how this requirement is monitored and adhered to.
	Experience in the audit of United Nations organizations or national public sector organizations, or international non-governmental organizations	Audit institution demonstrates its officers and staff have extensive experience in performance of audit work at United Nations organizations or national public sector organizations, or international non-governmental organizations, and that its officers and staff are up to date on emerging issues and trends in the audit and businesses of these organizations.
	Familiarity with the audit of financial statements prepared in accordance with IPSAS	Audit institution demonstrates its officers and staff have a theoretical knowledge acquired through training or other relevant means of the audit of financial statements prepared in accordance with IPSAS.
	Staff adequately trained in current trends of auditing and with extensive audit experience	Audit institution demonstrates that its officers and staff regularly and proficiently attend auditing “best practices” professional seminars or other means of adequate training in modern and emerging audit trends and techniques, and that officers and staff individually have extensive audit experience.

	Criteria	Score 5—Highest, fully meets criteria
<b>AUDIT APPROACH AND STRATEGY</b>		
	Comprehensive work plans to ensure adequate audit coverage of all WFP resources	Audit institution demonstrates it prepares extensive and comprehensive work plans, coordinates and communicates this with management of the audited organization. The audit institution demonstrates its audit methodology conforms to best practices, including the consideration of risks. The audit institution demonstrates it implements adequate quality assurance procedures and programmes to ensure audit work is always of high standard.
	Performance of financial and compliance audits as well as economy, efficiency and value-for-money audits	Audit institution demonstrates it has extensive experience in conducting financial, compliance, economy, efficiency and value-for-money audits. Audit institution demonstrates it has adequate division and structure in the organization of responsibility along lines of types and nature of work undertaken (to ensure specialization and extensive audit skill and experience resources available to the institution). Audit institution demonstrates it is able to take initiative and to deal effectively and in an innovative manner, in coordination and cooperation with management, with new and emerging or particular issues relevant to the audit and business of WFP.
	The proposed approach to staffing the external audit of WFP minimizes the compliance costs to WFP	The audit institution's approach to staffing the audit demonstrates an appropriate balance between providing continuity of audit staff so as to minimise the learning curve for new audit staff and the ability to draw on additional audit staff or specialist skills where needed.
	Collaboration with WFP's internal audit to optimize the use of limited audit resources	Audit institution demonstrates extensive experience and reliance placed on work of internal audit units. The audit institution demonstrates how the use of limited audit resources was optimized in the institution's own experience, and how the institution will optimize this in the audit of WFP.
	Delivery of audit results	Audit institution demonstrates results are delivered in a timely and appropriate manner.

	Criteria	Score	5—Highest, fully meets criteria
<b>QUALITY CONTROL</b>			
	Quality review process in place to ensure quality control		Audit institution demonstrates it has an internal quality review process and exposure to external INTOSAI peer review.

	Criteria	Score 5—Highest, fully meets criteria
<b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>		
	Timely communication of audit results presented to management through comprehensive management letters and audit reports and meetings as necessary	<p>Audit institution demonstrates how it delivers messages to various functions, including the Audit Committee.</p> <p>Audit institution demonstrates its audit reports are structured in a format judged to be adequate to convey clearly results of the audit. Audit institution demonstrates it conveys audit results in a timely manner and with effective basis to management, discusses audit results on a preliminary basis with management, provides opportunity to management to make comments and provide input before management letters or audit reports are finalized, and reflects in the final management letter or audit report management's comments and input, as necessary.</p>
	Audit reports are presented within United Nations deadlines	

	Criteria	Score 5—Highest, fully meets criteria
<b>COSTS</b>		
	Most competitive fees	Audit institution's fees are very competitive and judged to be adequate and proportionate to the work to be undertaken, and the institution demonstrates these fees are not too low so as to inhibit effective and efficient execution of audit work or too high as may be judged to be disproportionate to the work to be undertaken.