



STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. DAYANA RIOS, MINISTER COUNSELOR IN THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 132, "PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2014-2015: CAPITAL MASTER PLAN, AT THE MAIN PART OF THE SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 10 November 2014)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 132: Programme Budget for the biennium 2014 - 2015: Capital Master Plan.

2. The Group of 77 and China would like to thank Mr. Yukio Takasu, Under-Secretary-General for Management, for introducing the Addendum reports of the Secretary-General to the twelfth annual progress report on the implementation of the Capital Master Plan. The Group also thanks Mr. Steven Townley, Director of External Audit (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and Chair of the Audit Operations Committee of the Board of Auditors, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for their respective introductions of the reports of the Board of Auditors and the Advisory Committee on this important item.

Mr. Chairman,

3. Over the past years, the Group of 77 and China has consistently maintained that the CMP must be completed in time and within the approved budget, without affecting the original scope or compromising on the quality of the final product.

4. The Group takes note of the information provided by the Secretary-General on the need for the General Assembly to take a decision on the financing of the cumulative associated costs and the secondary data center during this session. The Group of 77 and China supports the appropriation and assessment of those expenditures under the capital master plan project, in order to immediately replenish the Working Capital Fund and the Special Account, which were used as a bridging mechanism, on an exceptional basis, according to resolution 68/247B. We recall that on the basis of that same resolution, the General Assembly recognized the need to fund the budget shortfalls, including those related to associated costs, on the basis of the costs provided by the SG report that is being introduced today.

Mr. Chairman,

5. As we approach the closeout of the project, the Group welcomes the important achievements so far. Nevertheless, there are serious questions and issues that need to be addressed before the conclusion of CMP. In this regard, the Group will seek further clarification regarding the transfer of responsibilities from the Office of the Capital Master Plan to the Office of Central Support Services.

6. The Group has also taken note that there are some deficiencies in the renovated facilities, in particular conference rooms that need immediate attention. These are issues related to inaccessible power sockets, difficulties on some seating and accessibility by delegates including

people with disabilities. The Group would like to emphasize the need for the Secretary General to ensure these issues are rectified as soon as possible. The Group would also be interested to learn the accountability elements on these issues during our informal consultations.

7. With regard to the renovation of the South Annex and the Library buildings, the Group of 77 and China notes with serious concern that the Secretariat did not present plans for the future of the two buildings, which are an integral part of the original scope of CMP. The Group regrets that the request presented in resolutions 68/247 A and B for feasible alternative options for the location of the functions currently housed in the Library and the South Annex building independent of the long-term accommodation has not been adequately addressed.

8. Once again, the Group is very concerned that the Secretariat did not present viable alternatives to complete the project in its entirety. We reiterate that the Group cannot accept that solutions for integral aspects of the completion of the Capital Master Plan become conditioned to a solution on a different item under consideration of this Committee. The Group will not consider the work of the CMP completed until the South Annex and Library buildings are renovated.

9. The Group questions the rationale for using the Temporary North Lawn Building for CMP-unrelated activities and in this regard, we concur with the ACABQ that such use could cause further delay in the planned dismantlement of that building.

Mr. Chairman,

10. The Group of 77 and China reaffirms its long-standing position that the architectural integrity of the United Nations complex must be preserved. In that regard, the Group is concerned with apparent delays in the planned demolition and recalls that in its resolution 65/269, the General Assembly approved the mandate for the timely demolishing and removal of the Temporary North Lawn Building upon the completion of the Headquarters renovation work. We request the Secretary-General to fully abide by the General Assembly decision.

11. The Capital Master Plan was conceived as a project to refurbish, modernize and preserve the architecture of the landmark Headquarters of the United Nations. The Group finds it extremely important that every effort is made to achieve these objectives in their entirety, as approved by the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

12. The Group of 77 and China is concerned by further delays in the security-related work at 42nd and 48th streets caused by the late issuance of permits by the host city. The Group is concerned with the impact on the delay in the conclusion of CMP and we will seek further clarification during informal consultations.

13. We would like to recall the decisions of the General Assembly that notes the benefits accruing to host countries from the presence of the United Nations; stresses the special role of the host country Government with regard to support for United Nations Headquarters in New York; and recalls the current practices of host Governments with regard to support for United Nations headquarters and United Nations bodies located in their territories.

14. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, the Group of 77 and China would like to assure you of our readiness to engage constructively in deliberation on this agenda item with the aim of concluding it in a timely manner.

I thank you.

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