



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. SAINIVALATI S. NAVOTI, COUNSELLOR, PERMANENT MISSION OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA ITEM 144: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESIDUAL MECHANISM, DURING THE FIRST RESUMED PART OF THE 67TH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 8 March 2014)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 144, Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, in particular construction of the new facility for the International Residual Mechanism in Arusha.

2. The Group would like to thank the Director of the Programme Planning and Budget Division, Mr. Johannes Huisman, for introducing the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/67/696. The Group would also like to thank Mr. Carlos Massieu, Chairperson of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing the related report contained in document A/67/768.

Mr. Chairman

3. The Group of 77 attaches great importance on timely implementation of the construction and maintenance of UN office accommodation not only for the Tribunals and Residual Mechanism but also for all headquarters, regional commissions and other field based offices.

4. The Group recalls that by its resolution 66/240 B, the General Assembly noted with concern that the project duration for the construction of the International Residual Mechanism in Arusha was estimated to be five years and three months and requested the Secretary-General to make every effort to reduce the time needed to complete the construction while guaranteeing the effective oversight of the project.

5. The Group also recalls that by the same resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at the first resumed part of 67th session of General Assembly a report providing more detailed information on the key decision points regarding the conceptual design, project plan and overall cost estimate of the project, as well as information on his efforts to reduce the duration of the construction project in Arusha.

Mr. Chairman,

6. Our Group appreciates the effort so far made in responding to the General Assembly requests on the completion of the conceptual design, project plan and overall cost estimate of the project, as well as reduction of the construction time.

7. In this regard, we encourage the Secretary-General to continue to explore the additional measures to further reduce the time for construction of the project where feasible while guarantee quality and oversight, with lessons learned from implementation of other construction projects such as the UN Office in Nairobi and the Economic Commission for Africa.

8. Our Group is also pleased to learn that local knowledge has been used in the design stage and

like the ACABQ, we encourage the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in this regard including but not limited to procurement opportunities on this project in line with the best practices adopted in construction at the UNON and ECA.

Mr. Chairman,

9. The Group of 77 recalls paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 66/240 B and regrets that the Secretary-General's report did not include the information on the assessment of the remaining US\$ 1.5 million for this year. This omission has serious implications on the implementation of the mandate as approved. The Group will seek specific clarification in this regard during informal consultations.

10. The Group of 77 has learnt with interest that the African Court of Human and People's Rights will also be located in the neighborhood of IRM location. While we are mindful that these two entities will enjoy some economies of location, we are concerned with the ACABQ recommendation in paragraph 12 of its report. Due to the differences in their respective mandates, this might negatively impact the project implementation. The Group will keenly study the details of this recommendation.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The Group believes in the importance of this project be fully supported with approved budget level to avoid possible project over-run and the need for associated costs reviews by this Committee to ensure the project is implemented with known budget level. In this regard, our Group will call for approval of budget level as presented by the Secretary-General. The Group also supports the need for establishment of multi-year special account to facilitate all expenditures of this project as the best practice in the implementation of the construction projects.

12. The Group of 77 attaches great importance on the need for accountability and oversight of this project. In this regard, we encourage the Secretary General to ensure that oversight mechanisms are in place to mitigate risks and challenges arising from the project implementations. The Group also expects that the Secretary-General will continue to provide regular updates to Member States on the implementation of this project. The Group of 77 is further be pleased to remind that any change of the given mandate including on the scope of the project remains the sole prerogative of the Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

13. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China looks forward to engaging constructively on this important agenda item.

I thank you.