



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MR. LYLE DAVIDSON, COUNSELLOR OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 147: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL RESIDUAL MECHANISM FOR CRIMINAL TRIBUNALS - CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW FACILITY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RESIDUAL MECHANISM FOR CRIMINAL TRIBUNALS, ARUSHA BRANCH, AT THE FIRST PART OF THE RESUMED SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 4 March 2015)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 147: Financing of the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals - Construction of a new facility for the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, Arusha branch.
2. At the outset, the Group would like to thank Mr. Stephen Cutts, Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services, as well as Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for presenting the respective reports on this important agenda item.
3. The Group would like to reiterate the great importance attached to the construction of the new facility for the Mechanism in Arusha as a necessary element for the Mechanism to implement its mandate.

Mr. Chairman,

4. The Group welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the project, including the issuance of the certificate of occupancy to the Mechanism by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania which grants the Mechanism exclusive right of occupancy of the site for a term of 99 years, free of any annual rental charges or other fees to the United Nations. The Group also notes with satisfaction that the host government has completed construction of the access roads and the initiation of works related to the connection of utilities and other key infrastructure at no cost to the Organisation.
5. The Group would like to reiterate its appreciation to the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania for its continued support to the project as well as to the work of the Tribunal and Mechanism. We encourage the Secretary-General to ensure the continued cooperation between the Organisation and the host government in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

6. With regard to the procurement activities undertaken, the Group of 77 and China will request an update on the negotiation of the construction services contract which was to be concluded in February 2015. The Group emphasises the need for the Secretary-General to continue to ensure the procurement of goods and services for the project is carried out in full compliance with existing rules, regulations and relevant provisions of the General Assembly resolutions governing procurement in the United Nations.

7. The Group welcomes the inclusion of local knowledge and capacity and emphasises the need for continued efforts in this regard throughout the implementation of the construction project.

8. The Group of 77 and China reiterates the need to draw lessons and best practices from other construction projects undertaken, not only by the Organisation, but also by other public and private entities in the host country and in the region. The Group will seek further information on how key elements related to ICT infrastructure, energy efficiency and accessibility are taken into account in the project implementation.

9. The Group takes note of the information provided on governance and oversight of the project and looks forward to receiving updates on OIOS oversight coverage related to the project as well as implementation of the comments, observations and recommendations of the Board of Auditors in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,

10. In the context of the project schedule, expenditure and contingency, the Group notes with concern the four week delay in project implementation. The Group supports the Advisory Committee in urging the Secretary General to take all possible actions to make up for lost time to avoid negative implications, including possible cost escalation. The Group further concurs with the Advisory Committee on the need for the Mechanism to monitor the project more closely and take necessary measures to mitigate potential risk so as to ensure the project is completed within the given timeframe.

11. The Group will, therefore, seek further information during the informal consultations on the expenditure to date, planning assumptions, costs for architects and engineering consultancy, construction contracts as well as the use of the contingency fund.

Mr. Chairman,

12. In conclusion, the Group of G77 and China would like to assure you of its readiness to engage constructively in the upcoming discussions with the aim of concluding this agenda item in a timely fashion.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.