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**Statement by:**

**H.E. Ambassador Aman Hassen**

**Deputy Permanent Representative of the Federal**

**Democratic Republic of Ethiopia,**

**at the 5<sup>th</sup> Committee of the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the**

**United Nations General Assembly**

**on Agenda Item 133: Pattern of Conferences**

**New York**

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**(Please check against delivery)**

Mr. Chairman,

Let me start by extending my warm congratulations on your election to chair the 5<sup>th</sup> committee. My delegation has confidence in your wisdom and ability to guide successfully the complex and challenging work of the committee.

We would like to thank Mr. Jean-Jacques Graise, Acting Head of the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General contained in document 67/127. Our appreciation also goes to Mr. Collen V. Kellapile, Chairperson of the ACABQ, and Ms. Carolina Popovici, Chairperson of Committee on Conferences, for introducing the related reports of their respective Committee.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished representatives of Algeria and Cote D'ivoir on behalf of G77 and China and Africa, respectively.

Mr. Chairman,

We are taking the floor to make brief remarks on the conference center at the United Nations economic commission for Africa (UNECA). My delegation commends the efforts made by the secretary-general aimed at increasing the utilization rate of the

conference center. We particularly appreciate the publicity campaign through advertising in newspapers, on radio stations and exhibitions in Africa and outside the Continent for greater visibility and outreach. Besides, we have noticed the collaboration of ECA with key players in Ethiopia and abroad in public relations and promotional strategy for the period 2012-2013.

Notwithstanding the above fact, we wish to express our concern that ~~for three consecutive years i.e.~~ the utilization rate has remained at 70% for three consecutive years from 2009-2011. This shows that much remains to be done to attain the bench mark of 80%. For the conference center to be competitive, the ECA should also make appropriate maintenance of the conference facilities.

We recognize that the growing number conference facilities in Addis Ababa, and the inauguration of the conference complex of the African union in 2012 makes the need for aggressive marketing as well as timely maintenance of the centre even more important than ever. This situation necessitated for innovative marketing strategies that help increase the utilization rate in addition to the ongoing promotional activities.

We are of the opinion that important lessons can be drawn from the conference management experiences of other UN conference centers that are located in cities with high numbers of alternative and competitive conference facilities.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion we would like to request the Secretary General, in collaboration with the authorities of ECA, to continue explore additional means to increase the utilization rate of the conference center and maintain excellent standard in order to remain competitive. It is our considered view that clear strategies be devised to achieve the bench mark as well as the required resources that are needed to maintain the competitiveness of the center.

Thank you for your attention!