

Sixty-Ninth Session: Agenda item 147

**Fifth Committee of the General Assembly
4 March 2015**

**Report on the construction of a new facility for the Mechanism for International
Criminal Tribunals, Arusha branch**

**Remarks by Stephen Cutts, Assistant Secretary-General,
Office of Central Support Services, Department of Management**

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

I have the pleasure of introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/788), which provides an update on the progress made on the construction of the new premises of the Arusha branch of the Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/267.

I am pleased to report that key milestones in the project have continued to be met since the previous report a year ago.

The organization has successfully negotiated and awarded a contract for the provision of construction services with a general contractor based in Tanzania. Construction works have begun as of February of this year and are expected to last for twelve months.

This is a momentous achievement in the project, and is the result of successfully meeting all planned milestones to date. Since the previous report of the Secretary-General, the MICT has formalized the donation of the land from the United Republic of Tanzania to

the United Nations; entered into a contract with an architectural firm to develop the conceptual design as approved by the General Assembly; and ensured that the resulting detailed design was delivered on time. This enabled the MICT to proceed, on schedule, with the procurement exercise for the construction company. The procurement process is now complete, the construction contract is executed and construction is underway.

The project has entered its fourth year of planning and implementation, with a minor overall slippage of four to six weeks. This slippage represents an improvement of up to 50% of the previously reported two-month delay. Key to the achievements of the project team thus far are three indispensable and inter-linked factors: firstly, efficiency strategies; secondly, cooperation and coordination; and thirdly, accountability.

With respect to efficiency strategies, in 2012, it was initially estimated that this project would finish in March 2017. However, in response to the General Assembly's call for acceleration of the project, the MICT has been able to reduce the original timeline by fifteen months, and now estimates that the project will be completed by February 2016. The MICT has strategically identified and implemented measures aimed at executing the project within this streamlined schedule.

Consultations between the MICT and the Office of Central Support Services in the Secretariat, as well as other UN offices, have ensured that the lessons learned from other capital projects have been taken on board in order for the MICT to plan pre-emptively. For example, through extensive consultations with the architects, the MICT team ensured

that the design and preparation of the tender documentation ran concurrently, rather than consecutively. The project team confirmed programmatic and functional requirements at the design stage to minimize the risk of changes in scope during the execution of the works.

During the procurement of the construction services, the pre-bid conference and site-visit helped potential vendors prepare their proposals more accurately. Additionally, with a view to mitigating the risk of protracted negotiations, a draft contract was issued during the tender period and was available for comments from the bidders. These efforts resulted in the successful award of the construction contract in February of this year.

By requiring an established local business presence for both the architectural consultants and the construction firm, the MICT has been able to secure the incorporation of local expertise, which will prove invaluable for activities such as sourcing labour and materials in the region as well as ensuring expertise in the importation of goods and fully utilising prevailing local design and construction methods.

These efficiency measures have been made possible through consultation and coordination with the Office of Central Support Services, Overseas Property Management Unit and the Procurement Division as well as the Office of Legal Affairs.

The Secretary-General reiterates his appreciation and gratitude to the United Republic of Tanzania for its generosity and cooperation. The commitment of the host country to this

project has been outstanding, and the Organization looks forward to its continued collaboration with the United Republic of Tanzania.

In conclusion, The Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to take note of this progress report and seeks guidance on future reporting.

Mr. Chairman, distinguished delegates, I thank you for your attention.