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PERMANENT MISSION OF THE FEDERAL
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

866 Second Avenue, 3rd Floor • New York, N.Y. 10017

STATEMENT

BY

**H.E. AMBASSADOR FESSEHA ASGHEDOM TESSEMA
REPRESENTATIVE OF ETHIOPIA TO THE FIFTH
COMMITTEE OF THE SEVENTIETH SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**ON AGENDA ITEM 134: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET
FOR THE BIENNIUM, 2016-2017 IN PARTICULAR, PROGRESS
IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OFFICE FACILITIES AT
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA IN ADDIS ABABA
AND UPDATE OF THE RENOVATION OF CONFERENCE
FACILITIES, INCLUDING AFRICA HALL**

**December 01, 2015
New York**

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to express my appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, and the bureau for the way you are conducting the work of the 5th committee.

I would also like to thank Mr. Stephen Cutts, Assistant Secretary-General for the Office of Central Support Service for introducing the Report of the Secretary General and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for his report under this agenda item.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Republic of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the United Republic of Tanzania on behalf of African Group.

Mr. Chairman,

It has been a year since the symbolic and beautiful building of Zambezi was inaugurated in the presence of the Secretary General, the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, representatives of the Addis Ababa diplomatic corps as well as representatives of UN agencies and partners residing in the capital. The completion of this new office facility should be a source of satisfaction for the committee and

member states. The positive lesson drawn from the completion of this project could also be benchmarked for future projects.

Mr. Chairman,

Let this also be an opportunity to recall General Assembly resolution 69/262, section five of December 2014, which requested the Secretary General, inter alia, to present progress report on the construction projects at the Economic Commission for Africa, including on progress related to the implementation of the Africa Hall renovation Project. In this connection, we take note, with appreciation, the detail report submitted by the Secretary General. In the course of this process much has been done but we must also be conscious of what is still required.

My delegation strongly believes that the project has broader meaning in connection with Africa and its modern history and more specifically with history of decolonization process. The Hall symbolizes many of best values that brought member states together to achieve noble objectives.

In this connection, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my Government's commitment to do its part to facilitate completion of the Africa Hall renovation.

We pledge our cooperation to continue to work effectively and wholeheartly, with the ECA on the following already declared needs regarding the, Africa Hall project,

- a) With the objective of turning Africa Hall into a true monument of Africa's history, as emphasized during the 50th Anniversary of ECA held in October 2008, we will be ready to assist in identifying and providing collection of historical audio-video as well as printed materials and arts that highlight the historical significance of Africa Hall
- b) While reaffirming the need to source out feasible local materials for the project, we will be ready to work closely with ECA to facilitate smooth importation and clearance process of all required construction materials for the Africa Hall project, with the tax free privileges already in effect, so as to avoid costly delays in the project.
- c) With a view to making the Visitors Center worthy of the name, we will assist in promoting Africa Hall as an iconic and desirable tourist destination in Addis Ababa. The relevant government institutions will make this one of the priorities and the Ethiopian Airlines would be willing, through its in-flight entertainment system, including the well-known Selamta magazine, to be involved in this promotional work.

d) Emphasizing the need to include local knowledge and capacity throughout the implementation of the project as appropriate, we will assist in providing timely issuance of all required work permits for international consultants and contractors who will be coming to Ethiopia to work on the project.

e) Last, but not least, we welcome the inclusion of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the external stakeholders committee and reaffirm our commitment to do our part in the committee in structured and coordinated manner.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me say we are very hopeful that the goodwill we see from all concerned entities now would be maintained through the execution of the project. We, therefore look forward to engaging with the ECA to do our best in support of this project.

I Thank You!