

Check against delivery

**Statement of the Chairman**  
**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**  
**3 November 2015**

**Proposal for the seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project at  
the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific premises in  
Bangkok**

*(ACABQ report A/70/7/Add.3; Secretary-General's report A/70/356)*

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report (A/70/7/Add.3) on the proposal for the seismic mitigation retrofit and life-cycle replacements project at the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific premises in Bangkok (ESCAP) (A/70/356).

Mr Chairman,

I will summarize some of the key observations contained in the Committee's report. The Committee notes the conclusions of the seismic evaluation report regarding the seismic risk at ESCAP and considers that the seismic threat bears serious consideration. The Committee is therefore of the view that the proposal should have included an option to address the seismic risk, if considered urgent, on its own, as other construction works would be considered in the context of the strategic capital review.

The report also notes that a range of implementation options should have been presented for the General Assembly's consideration, including an option to conduct the proposed project in a single phase by moving all staff out of the buildings.

In accordance with General Assembly resolutions on other capital projects, the Committee also recommends the establishment of an independent and impartial Advisory Board to strengthen governance of the proposed project. The Committee's report contains more observations on the use of contingency, independent project assurance; the project management team and other aspects of the proposal.

For these and other reasons detailed in its report, the Committee recommends against approval of the proposed project. In light of this overall recommendation, the Committee does not make detailed observations on the specific resource requirements requested. The Committee trusts that any new proposal in this regard would address the Committee's observations.

I thank you, Mr Chairman.