

**Statement of the Chairman**  
**Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ)**  
**14 March 2016**

**Progress on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters**  
*(ACABQ report: A/70/7/Add. 45; related Secretary-General's report: A/70/708)*

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report on progress on the implementation of a flexible workplace at United Nations Headquarters.

The Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 69/274 A, requested the Secretary-General to assess the impact of the flexible workplace pilot on productivity and reflect reliable qualitative and quantitative benefit indicators as well as other factors for the improvement of overall productivity and staff well-being. The Committee notes that the Secretary-General has not yet finalized an assessment of the impact of a flexible workplace on overall productivity and staff well-being and reiterates the request made by the General Assembly in this regard.

The Advisory Committee notes that, in his current proposal, the Secretary-General provides implementation plans only for the first and second phases of the project that extend until June 2016. The Committee recommends that the General-Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide in his next progress report a detailed implementation plan for the full scope of the project, which can serve as a reliable basis for estimating the corresponding resource requirement and the timeframe.

The Advisory Committee notes with concern that when compared with the previous proposal for the application of flexible workplace strategies of the Secretary-General, his current proposal indicates both a longer timeframe for offsetting the cost of project implementation by the anticipated reductions in rental and operational costs and a lower level of reduction in annual rental costs after the project costs have been fully offset.

Mr Chairman,

The Advisory Committee further recalls that the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to review the costs of implementation of the project, including through reviewing reductions to the maximum extent possible, under specific items. The Advisory Committee therefore considers that the overall increase of \$16.1 million in the estimated project costs presented in the current proposal of the Secretary-General is not in consonance with the request made by the General Assembly. The Committee recommends the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to revisit his cost estimates for the project's implementation and provide updates in this regard in his next progress report.

Taking into account the overall resource requirements estimated by the Secretary-General for the implementation of the project in 2016, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for an amount not exceeding \$18 million for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016 and to submit his next report on this subject at the main part of the seventy-first session of the Assembly.

Thank you.