

Statement by Mr. Abbas Yazdani

Alternative Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran before the Fifth Committee on

Agenda item 134 "Second annual progress report on the Strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva"

70th General Assembly

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Mr. Chairman,

Since my delegation is taking the floor for the first time in this session, let me begin by congratulating on your assumption of the chair of the Fifth Committee and thanking you and other members of the bureau. I would like to assure you of my delegation's fullest support and cooperation in the deliberations and work of this Committee.

The Islamic Republic of Iran fully aligns itself with the statement made by the Delegation of South Africa on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and wishes to add the following in its national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation attaches great importance to the proper management of the Organization's property portfolio and the effective management of any construction undertaken by the Organization. We are greatly concerned over the current situation of the Palais des Nations in Geneva and are fully aware of the need to refurbish the Palais to ensure that structural deficiencies are rapidly addressed. In this regard, the Islamic Republic of Iran takes note with appreciation of the Secretary-General's second progress report on the planning and implementation of the strategic heritage plan. We welcome the progress made with regard to key project tasks including completion of in-depth site assessment and surveys, confirmation of the project scope, completion of the design master plan and feasibility study and completion of the concept design;

We also welcome completion of revised cost estimate and encourage the Secretariat to explore more feasible mechanisms to further reduce the need for overall assessments on Member States.

With regard to the issue of office space utilization, it is extremely important that the Secretariat takes into account the physical characteristics and heritage sensitivities of the existing buildings of the Palais des Nations as well as the high cost of conversion to open office space in the existing structures and we request the Secretariat to reconsider application of flexible workplace strategies at the existing buildings.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, my delegation is of the view that establishing an Advisory Board for the strategic heritage plan project is aligned with the lessons learned and will contribute to the achievement of the project objectives. At the same time emphasizes that such a Board should be established based on consultation by all interested Member States.

I thank you.