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Statement by Ms. Cherith Norman Chalet
Ambassador for UN Management and Reform
On Agenda Item 136: Strategic Heritage Plan
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[As Delivered]

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My delegation would like to thank Mr. Christian Saunders, Assistant Secretary General for Central Support Services, Mr. Bernard Holstein, United Nations Board of Auditors, and Mr. Carlos Massieu, Chairman of the ACABQ for introducing their respective reports.

The United States notes the progress to date on the Strategic Heritage Plan (SHP), including those efforts outlined in the Secretary-General's annual progress report. We also note the Board of Auditors' recommendations regarding project timeline and budget and risk management, and look forward to learning more about their implementation and how the UN plans to guard against these risks.

Mr. Chair,

Transparency and good governance must comprise member state decision-making on financing the SHP initiative. This includes related efforts to reduce the financial burden on member states through alternative options. In order to contain costs of this \$800m+ undertaking, any revenue gained from the leasing of any UN property in Geneva must be applied to the Strategic Heritage Plan. Every effort should also be made to avoid increases to the amounts of financing that is done through member state assessments.

Mr. Chair,

The Strategic Heritage Plan involves many components, including governance, risk management, space utilization, accessibility, and the newly proposed cooling and ventilation system. We look forward to discussing these issues further this session along with the financing arrangement to ensure that member states continue to provide the direction needed for success of the project.

Additionally, by its resolution 70/248, the General Assembly mandated implementation of flexible workplace as an integral aspect to the SHP. My delegation thanks the UN Office in Geneva and the Office of Central Support Services in the Department of Management for their efforts to maximize space efficiencies in the new and existing buildings, including the Palais des Nations. While the Palais is an historic building, we encourage the Secretary-General and his SHP team to continue to identify opportunities to modernize within that footprint to ensure a more flexible workplace with increased capacity, one that is better suited for the 21st century UN, especially given that the Palais des Nations is located in one of the more expensive cities in the world. In fact, A recent space utilization survey of space indicated that individual workspaces within the Palais des Nations complex were utilized throughout the day at an average rate of 51 percent.

In closing, my delegation would like to reiterate our commitment to the success of this project, including the need to transparently and effectively manage its resources in order to complete the project on time and within budget. We stand ready to work constructively with delegations to ensure that outcome.

Thank you.