



**Implementation of flexible workplace strategies at United Nations
Headquarters**

**Statement by Mr. Patrick Carey, Director, Division of Administration,
Department of Operational Support**

Fifth Committee

6 December 2019

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce to the Committee today the Secretary-General's fourth annual progress report on the implementation of flexible workplace strategies at United Nations Headquarters (A/74/345). The report provides an update on the status of the project since the third annual progress report ([A/73/370](#)) and responds to requests contained in resolution 73/279.

I am pleased to inform the Committee that the implementation of the project has proceeded over the last year to modernize the Secretariat workplace, in accordance with the project plan and budget, and continues to create efficiencies in terms of capacity.

As of today, nineteen floors of the Secretariat Building have been reconfigured to flexible workplace with an added capacity of 1,106. Currently there are approximately 2,200 staff working in a flexible workplace environment.

With more than half of staff in the Secretariat building now working in the flexible workplace, the project has also provided greater flexibility to meet the

modified office accommodation requirements resulting from decisions of the General Assembly on reform proposals related to the peace and security, development and management pillars.

In this context, this month the reconfiguration of the 25th and 26th floors, presently occupied by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), will start on the 13th and 20th of December respectively. Once renovated, the 25th floor will be used to accommodate the UN Development Coordination Office (UN DCO).

It is estimated that by the completion of the project, we will create further additional capacity of 262 bringing the overall capacity increase of 1,368 in the Secretariat since the beginning of the flexible workplace project. This reflects an increase on the estimated capacity increase reflected in the last report of the Secretary-General.

The report also gives details of the staff survey and focus groups carried out in May 2019 of staff on five floors who had occupied flexible workplace floors in the preceding months. The overall satisfaction score reflects a decrease from the result of the 2018 survey but remains higher than the result of the survey on office space carried out prior to the implementation of flexible workplace in 2014. There were differences in the results on various floors, with these floors which appear to be operating in line with the recommended protocols for a flexible workplace environment having higher scores.

The report presents an updated schedule for the completion of the remaining floors to be modernized during 2020. The overall project cost and timeline remains as presented in the second progress report of the Secretary-General in October

2017 (A/72/379), with the addition of funding of \$378,000 being sought for the requested independent evaluation of the project.

The Assembly is requested, to take note of the project plan and its estimated cost; to approve the continuation of the project as well as the three temporary positions for the project team; and to appropriate an amount of \$8,309,700 for the project costs and an independent evaluation in 2020.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.