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Progress in the renovation of Africa Hall and the construction of new office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa

FIFTH COMMITTEE

Statement by

Mr. Pedro Guazo, Director, Finance Division
Office of Programme Planning, Finance and Budget
6 December 2019

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

The Secretary General's report, A/74/328, highlights the progress made during the reporting period on the renovation of the Africa Hall at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, as well as the close-out of the New Office Facility project.

With respect to the New Office Facility project, I am pleased to report that retention payment to the contractor has been released and the project is now finally completed and closed out.

Moving now to the renovation of the Africa Hall, the implementation of the early-decanting works commenced in January 2018 and is currently in its final stage.

The contract for the main renovation works was signed in May 2019. Currently, the contractor continues to face difficulties in mobilizing resources for the project and, as such, construction is expected to commence in the near future. Overall, the late appointment of the

contractor has caused delays in the project timeline of approximately eleven months, with expected completion by December 2022. The project team is monitoring the schedule closely and will further develop and implement mitigating measures as required to minimize or even avoid any further delays during the remaining project execution.

Noteworthy progress has been made in the negotiations with the Host Country regarding the use of land that is needed by the ECA to provide parking space for future visitors of the Africa Hall visitor's center and permanent exhibition, and a final agreement is expected to be signed soon.

Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

In consideration of the Secretary-General's report, the General Assembly is requested to: Take note of the progress made since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General; Take note of the revised cost plan for the project; and Approve an amount of \$8,434,100 for planned project activities in 2020.

I thank you.