

STATEMENT
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KENYA MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AGENDA ITEM 135
PROGRESS ON THE REPLACEMENT OF
OFFICE BLOCKS A-J
AT THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT
NAIROBI
2ND DECEMBER, 2019

Chair,

1. Thank you for giving me the floor.
2. I thank Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan, Controller, Assistant Secretary General for Programme Planning, Budget and Finance, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the **progress on the Replacement of Office Blocks A-J at UNON**. My delegation welcomes your Report. I also acknowledge the contribution of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).
3. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of the State of Palestine on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the distinguished representative of Botswana on behalf of the African Group. As host of the United Nations Office at Nairobi, Kenya attaches great importance to the Duty Station.

Chair

4. Before I proceed with my remarks on UNON, my delegations takes this opportunity to congratulate the successful collaborative hosting of the International Population Development (ICPD25) in Nairobi between United Nations and the Government of Kenya held at UNON from 13-15 November, 2019. As you are all aware, UNON is the only United Nations Headquarters in the Global South hosting the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). Nairobi also hosts peace-keeping operations as well as several country, regional and project offices of several UN agencies, funds and programmes and other entities.

5. Over the years, Kenya has invested heavily in ensuring that the environment is conducive for the United Nations to effectively and efficiently discharge its important mandate. We reiterate our commitment to continue honouring our obligations and responsibilities in conformity with the Headquarters Agreement.

Chair,

6. The United Nations Offices presence in Nairobi has expanded over the years. In order to accommodate all United Nations funds, programs and agencies, new additional office facilities were constructed in 2010. However, there have been more requests that have been received by various UN agencies where some would wish to be accommodated in the UN compound, while others have indicated that they need more office space.
7. By its resolutions 72/262 A and 73/279 A, the General Assembly appropriated a total of \$7,098,300 for construction of blocks A-J for the period 2018–2019. My delegation welcomes the Secretary projected expenditure for 2020 amounting to \$13,116,200 for the project. We note that implementation of the early works component is delayed by six months due to delays in design and tendering processes. We therefore encourage the Secretary General to continue putting in place adequate mitigation measures to ensure that further delays are avoided.

Chair,

8. Over the years, the infrastructure supporting the Gigiri area location of UNON, has been improved considerably. The Government of Kenya has invested heavily in improvement of infrastructure which include: road expansion, signaling at major road intersections, creation of link roads and dualling of some roads. There have been further improvements aimed at decongesting secondary and exit points to the UN complex by creating an all-weather road emergency exit route from UN on the perimeters of the adjacent Karura Forest. Additional measures are under consideration including the expansion of utility services to support the area and specifically, any developments on the UN Gigiri complex. The Government of Kenya's investments to-date including future investments for the next 10 years are estimated at US\$656.9million.
9. Construction of blocks A-J will have some significant benefits including the renewal and replacement of the key elements of existing office buildings namely electrical, mechanical and plumbing services, fire safety elements, accessibility improvements, energy efficiency and sustainability upgrades. These works will increase the remaining useful life of the building and minimize major capital investment requirement for the next 20 years. This is in addition to the increased space utilization in comparison to the existing one.
10. My delegation fully supports the recommendation by the ACABQ that the General Assembly approves the establishment of a multi-year construction-in-progress account for the project.

Chair,

11. Finally, my delegation is convinced that UNONs presence in Africa demonstrates the commitment and potential of the African Continent to Multilateralism and rules-based world order. There is certainly more we can do collectively to build further on this legacy by availing more opportunities to support the needs of the UN from Africa. Kenya is hopeful that the UN system will continue to increase its funding for UNON as a truly UN Headquarters not only in Africa, but in the developing world in order to be par with all other United Nations Headquarters.

12. My delegation looks forward to engaging constructively during informal consultations on this important matter.

13. Thank you all for your attention!