

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMB. TOM AMOLO, M.B.S SPECIAL ENVOY FOR THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL CAMPAIGN, POLITICAL AND DIPLOMATIC SECRETARY OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AMBASSADOR/PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE, KENYA MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR 2020; ADDRESSING THE DETERIORATING CONDITIONS AND LIMITED CAPACITY OF THE CONFERENCE SERVICES FACILITIES AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE, MAIN PART OF THE 74TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

13 DECEMBER 2019

1. Thank you Chairman for giving me the floor.
2. From the outset, I wish to thank Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan, Controller, Assistant Secretary General for Programme Planning, Budget and Finance, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General on Addressing the Deteriorating Conditions and Limited Capacity of the Conference Services Facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON). I also thank Mr. Cihan Terzi, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) for introducing its related report.
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. My delegations wishes to make additional comments.

Mr. Chairman

4. My delegation welcomes the concerted efforts by the Secretary General to address the deteriorating conditions and limited capacity of the conference centre at the United Nations Office at Nairobi. This situation is greatly affecting the ability of the Secretariat to service the regular calendar meetings of United Nations bodies headquartered in Nairobi and the other major international meetings and conferences held there.

5. The United Nations Office at Nairobi is mandated to provide conference services to the two United Nations programmes headquartered in Nairobi; the UN-Habitat and UNEP. Both the United Nations Environment Assembly and the recently instituted United Nations Habitat Assembly of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme have universal membership, in contrast to their previous Governing Councils, which comprised only 58 members each. In addition, the conference centre in Nairobi provides a full range of conference facilities to the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in Nairobi.

6. The United Nations Office at Nairobi successfully hosted both the United Nations Environment Assembly and the UN-Habitat Assembly in 2019 and, as a result of unprecedented participation levels, faced significant challenges regarding both the condition of the facilities and their limited capacity. It is also important to highlight the risk and potential reputational loss that the

United Nations faces by continuing to try to support conferences of that magnitude using the existing, ageing and inadequate conference facilities.

7. We reiterate the call by members states that UNEP and UN-Habitat comply with the headquarters rule, that all meetings of the Nairobi-based United Nations bodies are held in Nairobi, in order to further increase the utilization of the conference facilities at UNON.
8. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, adopted by General Assembly in its resolution 61/106 in 2006, prescribes, inter alia, the removal of barriers in the physical environment and the provision of information and the availability of assistive devices to enable the full participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities. Given the commitment of the United Nations to promoting accessibility and the equal participation of persons with disabilities, we reiterate the call that the United Nations premises and facilities “walk the talk” and serve as examples of best practice in this regard.
9. My delegation looks forward to engaging constructively during informal consultations on this important matter.
1. Thank you for your attention.