

Statement of the Chairman
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions
25 November 2019

**Sixth annual progress report on the strategic heritage plan
of the United Nations Office at Geneva**

(ACABQ report: A/74/7/Add.13; related report of the Secretary-General: A/74/452)

Mr Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report (A/74/7/Add.13) on the sixth annual progress report on the strategic heritage plan of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

The Advisory Committee notes the progress that has been made and the completion of some of the project activities, including the full incorporation of flexible workplace strategies in the construction of the new building H and the completion of technical design work and the launch of the tender for the renovation of the existing historic buildings.

The Committee is nevertheless concerned by the delays and projected increased costs, as well as the increased risks to the project schedule and cost plan that are presented in the sixth progress report, with a corresponding **decrease in the estimated resources available for contingency**. It recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that all mitigation measures are taken to complete the SHP project within the overall resources approved by the General Assembly.

Concerning the target of lowering the energy consumption of the Palais des Nations by at least 25 per cent compared with the 2010 baseline, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide further information on the updated target and calculation methodology in his next progress report. The Committee also stresses the need to gather sound and reliable baseline data both on energy consumption and energy costs that can be used to measure actual improvements achieved after completion of the project.

The Advisory Committee highlights again the importance of a decision by the General Assembly on the scheme and currency of appropriation and assessment as well as on the establishment of a multi-year special account.

The Committee also recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide in his next progress report, further information on the potential donation and the framework agreement on the envisaged visitors centre, including heritage aspects.

The Advisory Committee considers that the valorisation strategy, as set out in the report of the Secretary-General, lacks clarity and does not provide adequate information for decision-making by the General Assembly. In view of the scope, duration and resource requirements for the envisaged preparatory works, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include a detailed plan for the valorisation of United Nations land in his next progress report on the SHP.

Thank you, Mr Chair.