

REMARKS BY AMB MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 138: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR 2022: CONSTRUCTION AND PROPERTY MANAGEMENT IN RELATION TO THE PROGRESS ON THE REPLACEMENT OF OFFICE BLOCKS A-J AT THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT NAIROBI (UNON) AT THE MAIN PART OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(NEW YORK, December 10, 2021)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honor to speak on Agenda Item 138: Proposed Programme Budget for 2022: Construction and Property Management in relation to the progress on the replacement of office blocks A-J at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON).
2. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan, Controller, Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning, Budget and Finance, for introducing the Secretary-General's report on this agenda item. We also thank Mr. Abdallah Bachar Bong, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for presenting the Advisory Committee's related report.
3. My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Ambassador Boubacar Diallo, the G77 coordinator, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Guinea to the United Nations, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Cameroon on behalf of the African Group.
4. As the host country, Kenya attaches great importance to the location of the United Nations Office at Nairobi as one of the four UN headquarter

duty stations. It is not lost on us that UNON is the only UN headquarter duty station in a developing country. Similarly, the Government of Kenya is conscious of its role as Host Country and continues to make major investments in infrastructural projects, ranging from roads, water, electricity and sanitation within and around the Gigiri area, where the UN complex is located with the aim of enhancing connectivity and security.

Chair,

5. My delegation underscores the paramount importance of close coordination and collaboration between the United Nations and the host country in ensuring successful implementation of the project. In this regard, the Government of Kenya through Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other Government agencies will continue to facilitate the work of the UN in Kenya in order to effectively achieve its mandate. In this regard, amidst challenges arising from the covid-19 pandemic, we have continued honouring our commitments under the Headquarters Agreement by facilitating the requisite immunities and privileges. To ensure business continuity, the Government of Kenya provided facilitation for the opening of the UNON and was instrumental in providing covid-19 vaccines for UN staff, at our expense.

6. We welcome the Secretary General's report outlining the progress on the replacement of office blocks A-J at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON). This progress has been achieved despite delays caused by covid-19 and the resultant disruptions in global procurement and supply chain. We particularly commend UNON leadership and the project management team for being able to adapt and work with resilience during this period of unprecedented challenges. We further acknowledge the support by the Global Asset Management Policy Service (GAMPS) at the UN Headquarters on risk mitigation and alignment with lessons learned from other UN capital projects to avoid further delays to the project schedule. To this end, we reaffirm our unwavering commitment and support to ensure that the

project is completed on time and within the budget Approved by the General Assembly.

7. My delegation notes that the master plan has taken into consideration important factors such as plans to reclaim and revert the current sites of blocks A-J to an environmental park. Being the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN Habitat, this is a welcome decision and we applaud it. We further note that the design for the new Secretariat building will continue to be modular and scalable, so that, if any currently unforeseen circumstance related to the pandemic arises, such aspects could be addressed during the design development.
8. My delegation acknowledges with appreciation the efforts made by the Secretary General through the UNON project management team in the use of local knowledge and locally manufactured products, such as the design and manufacture of furniture for the outdoor 'workpods' by local artisans. This is in line with the General Assembly previous resolutions calling for use of local knowledge and expertise as much as possible in the project. We encourage the project team to scale up the efforts and explore further opportunities in support of local procurement opportunities as the project enters its next phase, particularly during the design and construction phase of the new building.

Chair,

9. In conclusion, my delegation emphasizes that UNON's location in Africa is a clear testimony that the African Continent is an important player in multilateralism and rules-based world order.
10. My delegation is open to constructive discussions during the informal consultations on this matter.
11. I Thank you.