



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY AMBASSADOR BOUBACAR DIALLO, THE G77 COORDINATOR, THE PERMANENT
MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF GUINEA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON AGENDA
ITEM 138: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR 2022: ADDRESSING THE
DETERIORATING CONDITIONS AND LIMITED CAPACITY OF THE CONFERENCE
SERVICES FACILITIES AT THE UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT NAIROBI AT THE MAIN
PART OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE SEVENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, December 15, 2021)

Mr. Chair,

1. I have the honour to submit this written statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China under agenda Item 138: Proposed Programme Budget for 2022: Addressing the deteriorating conditions and limited capacity of the conference services facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi
2. The Group would like 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. We also thank Mr. Abdalla Bachar Bong, Chair of the Advisory Committee for Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), for introducing the committee's related report.
3. At the outset, the Group of 77 and China would like to express its profound gratitude to the Government of Kenya as the host country of UNON for its continued support to the work of the United Nations Office at Nairobi.
4. The Group of 77 and China continues to be a strong supporter of the modernization and maintenance of all facilities across the United Nation in order to improve the working conditions and safety of staff and delegates. The agenda item under consideration, therefore, remains of utmost priority of the Group.
5. The Group remains concerned by the deteriorating condition of the Nairobi conference centre, which is severely hampering the capacity to provide conference services, especially for the regular calendar meetings of the United Nations bodies, headquartered in Nairobi.
6. We are acutely aware that the conferencing needs of both UNEP and UN-Habitat have significantly expanded since the original master plan for the complex was considered, in the 1980s, and continue to do so. We take note that that as reported in the Secretary General's report, over 5,000 participants attended the last in-person United Nations Environmental Assembly, held in 2019, and the projection for future meetings is between 7,000 and 9,000 in-person participants and that number will be surpassed in the foreseeable near future.
7. The Group welcomes the Secretary General's proposal on addressing the deteriorating conditions and limited capacity of the conference services facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi estimated to cost \$278.9 million. It is noted that expansion of conference facilities at the United Nations Office at Nairobi was identified as one of the projects in the Strategic Capital Reviews. The Strategic Capital Reviews stipulate the long-term maintenance framework developed by the Secretary-General to ensure a comprehensive assessment of accommodation needs and underpin the methodology for establishing a strategic capital investment plan for the United Nations.

8. As stipulated in the previous reports of the Secretary General on capital reviews, this project proposal will be instrumental in contributing towards proper management of the organization's property and provision of healthy and safe environments for occupants and visitors over the long term as well as general improvements of working conditions.

9. The Group believes that for the project to be completed in time and within budget as well as to adhere to its scope of work, the role of project governance and oversight arrangements cannot be over-emphasized. This includes ensuring effective management, accountability and transparency measures. In this regard, the Group notes that the report contains specific proposals on establishment of clearly defined coordination with the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance at Headquarters, as well as leading departments and offices operating both in Nairobi and at the UN Headquarters, establishment of a project management team, a steering committee as well as an advisory board.

10. The Group recalls that in previous resolutions related to construction, the General Assembly has impressed upon the Secretary-General on the need to use local capacity including knowledge, technology, expertise and locally produced materials in construction projects. It is therefore hoped that during the design and implementation stages of the project, all efforts will be made to use locally manufactured or available materials as well as knowledge and technology.

11. The Secretary General indicates that a comprehensive review of the cost estimates for the two scalable options for renovation and expansion of the conference facilities, options A and B, presented in the previous report, was undertaken, including preparation of a proposed project implementation strategy. Options A and B partially and fully, respectively, meet the additional capacity requirements of the conference facilities at the Office, and option B, is recommended for implementation.

12. The initial required funds are \$1,996,000 for the initial preparatory works. The group believes that the Secretary General will put all the appropriate arrangements for the project to be completed within scope, timelines and budget. 13.

13. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China would like to assure you of its readiness to engage constructively in the upcoming informal consultations with the aim of concluding this agenda item in a timely manner

Thank you.