



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS. DAYANA RIOS, MINISTER COUNSELLOR IN THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS, ON THE AGENDA ITEM 132, PROGRAMME BUDGET 2014-2015: STRATEGIC HERITAGE PLAN, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING THE MAIN PART OF SIXTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (New York, 21 November 2014)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 132 entitled "Program Budget for the biennium 2014-2015: Strategic Heritage Plan". We would like to thank the Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services, Mr. Stephen Cutts, for introducing the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/69/417. We also wish to thank the Chairperson of the ACABQ, Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, for introducing the related report of the Advisory Committee as contained in document A/69/580. Furthermore, we wish to express our appreciation for the briefing on the Strategic Heritage Plan by the Assistant Secretary-General, Mr. Stephen Cutts, on 7 October 2014.

Mr. Chairman,

2. The effective and efficient management of the Organization's property portfolio all over the world has always been an important issue for the Group of 77 and China. We are greatly concerned over the current condition of the Palais des Nations in Geneva and are fully aware of an urgent need to address the health, safety, usability and access needs of the Palais. We take note with satisfaction that progress has been made since the submission of the previous report.

3. We welcome the selections of the project management staff and the architectural firm, the establishment of internal control and the development of a project risk management. As the Capital Master Plan (CMP) is drawing to a close, the Organization has gained valuable experiences and lessons which will be very useful to the implementation of the Strategic Heritage Plan (SHP).

4. In line with resolutions 66/247 and 68/247, we wish to emphasize the importance of collection and promulgation of lessons learned from capital projects, especially the CMP. We note with concern the Board of Auditors comment contained in document A/69/5 (Vol. V) that unlike most other organizations, the United Nations does not currently have a mechanism for embedding the lesson learned from in the management of future major projects. We are, therefore, pleased to welcome that the collection of lessons learned and best practices is included as one of the key pre-designed activities for the SHP.

5. We would also like to stress the importance of establishing the project internal control mechanisms and project governance and oversight. We wish to recall the ACABQ comments contained in the document A/69/529 that the lack of an independent project governance mechanism is one of the key lessons learned from the implementation of the CMP and its recommendation that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to implement the recommendation of the Board of Auditors so as to have an established approach to providing independent project governance and assurance to all future major projects. Our Group will closely follow up on the establishments of a robust internal project control mechanisms and a project

governance and oversight framework for the SHP.

6. We note with appreciation the loan offer from the Swiss Government for both the renovation and the construction portions of the SHP. We are open to consider terms and modalities of the offer while seeking the most favorable terms for the Organization and acknowledge the efforts of the host country to ensure the realization of the SHP.

7. We take note of the proposed SHP implementation plan which is envisaged in four phases over 8 years and of the proposed schedule to commence the construction works of the SHP by early 2017. We hope that the CMP will be fully completed by the end of 2016 so that the SHP can begin as scheduled. This will ensure that these two major capital expenditure projects will not be implemented simultaneously in line with the resolution 66/247 and that the General Assembly will have sufficient time to consider the SHP in all aspects before making a final decision.

8. It is important to note that unlike the CMP where our Group members in the Fifth Committee can witness first-hand the conditions of the headquarters compound before the renovation and were occasionally invited to monitor the progress, for the SHP we will have to rely heavily on the Secretariat to provide us with detailed information that can be conceptualized and visualized.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Before concluding, I wish to reiterate that the Group of 77 and China is fully cognizant of the Secretary-General's long term vision to ensure that the United Nation Headquarters in Geneva will remain an important center for the work of the organization. We would, therefore, like to re-assure you of our continued commitment to participate in the constructive deliberations on this important item with the aim to ensure that the Strategic Heritage Plan can commence on the proposed schedule.

I thank you.