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**Statement of the Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Committee on
Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the Fifth Committee**

28 March 2014

**Study on the long-term accommodation needs
at United Nations Headquarters 2014-2034**

ACABQ report: A/68/798;
Report of the Secretary-General: A/68/734

Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to introduce the Advisory Committee's report (A/68/798) regarding the study on the Headquarters long-term accommodation needs for the period 2014 to 2034.

The Advisory Committee notes that the Secretary-General has presented six additional options in his report (A/68/734), further to the four options contained in his report on the expanded feasibility study (A/67/720). Of the total of the 10 options, the Secretary-General considers 3 options (options 1, 3 and 4) as viable and advantageous for the Organization.

The Advisory Committee further notes that the three options deemed viable by the Secretary-General are all from his previous report on the expanded feasibility study (A/68/720), while the six additional options presented in his new report (A/68/734) are considered non-feasible and have not benefitted from further consideration and analysis. In the view of the Committee, the Secretary-General should have given adequate considerations to the additional options and alternative financing opportunities, some of which or a combination of which might prove viable.

On the basis of its comments and observations, the Advisory Committee is not in a position to recommend any of the options for consideration by the General Assembly at this time. Without prejudice to any decision by the Assembly on Headquarters long-term office space needs on the basis of every option, and given the time sensitivity of option 3, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly express explicit willingness to allow the Secretary-General to continue to negotiate with the United Nations Development Corporation so as to ensure that option 3 remains viable. The Committee reiterates its view that the authority to negotiate, if granted by the Assembly to the Secretary-General, should refer to all options with a view to serving the best interests of the Organization.

Mr. Chairman,

The Advisory Committee has discussed a number of key factors and assumptions affecting the estimation of office space needs at the Headquarters in section II of its report. The factors and assumptions include population analysis, office space allowance and flexible workplace strategy, and an appropriate ratio of owned versus leased office space by the Organization, which should be linked to the planning for the future of the Organization. The Committee again expresses its view that the impact of major initiatives, such as Umoja, and a global service delivery model if approved by the General Assembly, should be factored into all major capital projects.

On the sequencing of United Nations capital project, the Advisory Committee notes the understanding of the Secretariat and the projected timeline for the sequencing of capital projects by the Secretariat. The Committee is of the view that the General Assembly may wish to confirm whether the understanding of the Secretariat is consistent with its definition of major capital expenditure projects.

Mr. Chairman,

In the view of the Advisory Committee, many issues related to cost comparisons, financing options and resource requirements need further clarification and analysis. Such issues include, inter alia, cost estimates for various options, ownership of land, architectural integrity, security-related requirements in cost estimation, arrangement with other UN entities that may participate in the long-term accommodation, as well as interest rates and third-party financing option. Detailed information in this regard is contained in section IV of the report of the Advisory Committee and related annexes to the report.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.