



**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA BY MS.
LOURDES PEREIRA SOTOMAYOR, FIRST SECRETARY, PERMANENT MISSION
OF ECUADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 135: PROGRAMME
BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2016/2017, CAPITAL MASTER PLAN, AT THE MAIN
PART OF THE SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(New York, 23 October 2017)**

Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honor to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item 135: Programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, Capital Master Plan (CMP).

2. At the outset, the Group would like to thank Mr. Andrew Nye, Officer-in-Charge, Facilities and Commercial Services Division of the Office of Central Support Services, for introducing the fifteenth annual progress report of the Secretary-General on the Capital Master Plan as well as Mr. Anand M. Bajaj, Director of External Audit of India and Chair of the Audit Operations Committee for introducing the report of the Board of Auditors (BoA). Our thanks also go to Mr. Mario Baez, Chief, Policy and Oversight Coordination Service and Mr. Carlos Ruiz Massieu, Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, for introducing their respective related reports.

Mr. Chairman,

3. The Group of 77 and China continues to be an advocate and supporter of the modernization and efficient maintenance of all facilities across the United Nations system. It is our objective to appropriately improve the working conditions and safety of staff, delegates and participants. The agenda item under consideration, therefore, remains a priority of the Group.

4. Speaking of priorities, the issue of accessibility continues to be high on the list. While the Group recognizes that a number of accessibility elements have been implemented under the CMP, we are of the view that there is a need to conduct a review of the Headquarters compound in order to identify any gaps in the infrastructure compared with physical accessibility requirements under local building codes. The Group looks forward to the Secretary-General conducting such a review and reporting thereon in his next progress report.

5. With respect to efficiencies, the group welcomes savings that have been realized by the implementation of the capital master plan where, notably, the total energy consumption being reported reduced substantially by more than 75 per cent in 2016 and 2017 compared with the total consumption in 2006.

6. Though the gains are noted, the Group expresses regret that the Secretary-General did not quantify the monetary benefits and savings from the reduction in energy consumption and

requests the Secretary-General to provide in his next progress report, data on the quantifiable efficiency gains achieved, both in terms of energy usage and costs of utilities based on the actual data gathered.

Mr. Chairman,

7. Maintenance is an important component in the life cycle of a building as this, among other things, would ensure the safety and security of its occupants as well as help retain the value of the property. On that score, the Group expresses disappointment at the non-availability of a maintenance data to track and measure maintenance practices and approaches due to the delayed deployment of the Umoja plant maintenance module. The Secretary-General is thus requested by the Group of 77 and China to address this issue as a matter of priority, and to provide an update thereof.

8. The Group once again stresses that the CMP initially projected an anticipated final cost to renovate five buildings at an amount of \$1,876.7 million as against the current project cost which is estimated to be \$2,309.3 million for a reduced scope of the project to three buildings. The Group is of the view that it's imperative to systematically and thoroughly summarize and analyze information with regards to the lessons learned and best practices from CMP so as to provide guidance to the implementation plans of other capital projects and avoid any loss to the Organization. The Group recalls the Board of Auditors' recommendation regarding the need to report the full amount of savings arising from contract closure and in this regard, requests the Secretary-General to include in the sixteenth and final progress report of the project the aggregated cost to completion at the main part of the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

9. While the Group remains appreciative of the report of the Board of Auditors, it also expresses concern at the high number of outstanding recommendations of the Board as the project enters its final phase. The Group requests that every effort be made to implement the remaining recommendations expeditiously, and that a comprehensive update on the status of the outstanding recommendations be provided in the next report of the Board of Auditors and the final progress report of the Secretary-General.

10. In conclusion, the Group of 77 and China wishes to assure you of its readiness for a constructive engagement on this important agenda item during informal consultations.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.