

**Progress in the renovation of Africa Hall  
at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa  
(A/75/319)**

**Fifth Committee**

**Introductory statement  
by**

**Mr. Chandramouli Ramanathan,  
Assistant Secretary-General, Controller,**

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Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Delegates,

I am pleased to introduce the Secretary-General's report on the progress made for the ongoing construction project at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa.

I will only highlight some salient components of the report during my introduction. The main project objectives and scope remain unchanged.

I am pleased to report that negotiations with the Host Country regarding the use of land have been successfully concluded and the title deed transferred to ECA.

*Progress, budget, schedule and independent risk assessment updates*

The early-decanting works component has reached a completion level of ninety five per-cent in March 2020. Substantial completion of the early-decanting works component is foreseen to be achieved in January 2021.

The contract for the main renovation works could not be implemented as planned due to the bankruptcy of the joint venture's leading partner. The ECA terminated the contract in February 2020. Currently, the ECA is in the process of re-soliciting the main renovation works.

Substantial completion of the Africa Hall renovation project is now forecasted to be achieved in September 2023, approximately twenty-two months later than previously reported.

The ECA proposes to extend the dedicated project team accordingly. The ECA requests the approval of one new temporary project position of a Contract Manager at the P-3 level to provide contract administration services, from the beginning of 2021 until substantial project completion in September 2023.

Based upon the outcomes of the independent risk assessment performed by the Global Asset Management Policy Service, there is currently a forty three per-cent likelihood that the project will be delivered within budget. Despite this being a significant drop in confidence and far less than the 80% confidence benchmark set by the Organization for global capital construction projects, the ECA is proactively mitigating the risks of potential cost overruns and remains confident that the project will be delivered within the approved budget.

#### Next Steps

The main steps to be undertaken during the next reporting cycle comprise the following: (a) achieving substantial completion of the early-decanting works package and handing over its products to the ECA for operational use; (b) completion of the re-solicitation efforts and contract award to a professional firm for delivering the main renovation works package; (c) mobilization and delivery of the construction services of the main works contract; (d) selection of the professional firm (or firms) for some of the artwork restoration services; (e) solicitation and contract award to a professional firm for delivering the conference and information technology systems and network package; (f) delivery of the services of the conference and information technology systems and network contract; and (g) completion of the design development for the permanent exhibition and soliciting the related services.

The resource requirements for 2021 will be covered by the projected unspent balance at the end of 2020.

Mr. Chairman,  
Distinguished Delegates,

I thank you.