

**STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA
BY MR. LUKE DAUNIVALU, DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE
PERMANENT MISSION OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS ON AGENDA ITEM 134:
PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2014-2015 - PROGRESS IN THE
CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL OFFICE FACILITIES AT THE ECONOMIC
COMMISSION FOR AFRICA IN ADDIS ABABA, AT THE FIFTH COMMITTEE DURING
THE MAIN PART OF THE SIXTY-EIGHTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(New York, 13 December 2013)**

Mr. Chairman,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China on agenda item agenda item 134: Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 2014-2015, in particular the progress in the construction of additional office facilities at the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Allow me to thank Mr. Stephen Cutts, Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services and Mr. Richard Moon, Vice Chair of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions for introducing the respective reports on this agenda item.

Mr. Chairman,

The Group of 77 and China recalls that the by its resolution 63/263 the Assembly endorsed the need for Secretary-General to report annually on the progress on this construction project. The Group also recalls that the project time frame has been adjusted regularly and is now projected for completion at the end of this month, with occupancy starting in January 2014.

The Group welcomes the progress made so far despite many challenges and delays that has faced this project from its inception. In this regard we would like to pay special thanks to the Government of Ethiopia for their continued role and support in ensuring that the project is on track.

Mr. Chairman

The Group has also taken note of the reasons for delays in these projects including those related to errors on architecture and construction management consultants, materials importation, processing of payments to the bank and coordination by contractors. We have also taken note of the costs associated with the delays.

The Group is very concerned at the delays in the execution of this project and the financial implications for both the Organization and the prospective tenants and we look forward to clear explanations being provided during informal consultations on measures taken to handle these matters, including questions of accountability and supervision.

Mr. Chairman,

