Switzerland also supports the recommendations of the Secretary-General on the next stages of the implementation of the strategic heritage plan. We wish to underline in particular the urgency of this project. To ensure that the preparations under way can proceed smoothly and that the renovation can start as soon as the capital master plan has been completed, it is of paramount importance that the General Assembly authorises the continuation of the project during this session. Finally, it is also clear to us that the renovation of the Palais des Nations has to be addressed on its own merits, regardless of any other major capital project.

Mr. Chairman,

The Palais des Nations belongs to the United Nations. In its capacity as host country, Switzerland has a responsibility that goes beyond that of its role as Member State. To meet this responsibility, in 2011, Switzerland donated 50 million Swiss francs to be used for the work on energy efficiency measures. Following a request from the Secretary-General, the Swiss government also decided this year to reply favourably to any possible request from the General Assembly for one or more preferential loans to finance the renovation of the Palais des Nations. In so doing, Switzerland is committing itself to the success of this project. Switzerland also expects Member States to accept their responsibility as owners of the Palais and contribute to its renovation. We count on Members States to be united on this matter as we were for the renovation in New York. This would send a signal to the United Nations, having a modern, performing and efficient infrastructure appropriate to perform the tasks of the 21st century.

In this spirit, Switzerland calls on Member States to support this project.

My delegation