



Governing Body

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GB.313/PFA/INF/2(Add.)

Programme, Financial and Administrative Section

PFA

FOR INFORMATION

Building questions: Supplementary update on the headquarters building renovation project

Addendum

Summary: This paper provides further information on developments affecting the headquarters building renovation project.

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Related documents: GB.309/PFA/BS/2(&Corr.), GB.313/PFA/INF/2.

1. This paper provides information on developments regarding the headquarters building renovation project since the publication of document GB.313/PFA/INF/2.
2. The comprehensive plan for the renovation of the ILO headquarters building, approved by the Governing Body at its 309th Session (November 2010),¹ indicated that the refurbishment of two-thirds of floors 1 to 11 would be undertaken during the first phase of the renovation project (2011–15) and the remaining one third at the beginning of the final phase (2016–18). In order to be able to undertake the refurbishment accordingly, the project budget included a provision for the construction of a prefabricated building on the ILO grounds to be used as “swing space”.
3. In 2011, the Office prepared the plans and specifications necessary for the launch of an international competitive bidding process for the construction of the prefabricated building. Before launching the bidding process, the Office informally shared the plans and specifications with the host country authorities to ensure that the plans and specifications complied with local standards and regulations. The host country authorities in turn indicated informally that they expected that the Office would follow all local construction procedures.
4. Since the Office assessed that seeking a construction permit would risk incurring substantial delays, it requested two independent consultant firms to study all available documentation to determine the technical feasibility of undertaking the refurbishment of floors 1 to 11 one third at a time, rather than two-thirds concurrently, and the possible consequences in terms of cost and delays. Both consultants concluded that undertaking the refurbishment of floors 1 to 11 one third at a time was technically feasible and would have a limited effect on the duration of the refurbishment. While it would increase the cost of the refurbishment itself, due to the potential impact of inflation over a slightly longer period, the likely requirement for a larger number of staff movements and the probable need to rent some “swing space” commercially, this would be largely offset by the savings resulting from not constructing the prefabricated building. It would also spare the Office the cost and burden of dismantling the prefabricated building and the environmental impact of such an operation.
5. The Office is determined to manage space allocation more strictly (but largely respecting existing rules), make more effective use of space available on the lower floors of the building and rationalize the space available for short-term staff and interns. Under this approach it would be possible to accommodate most staff within the existing building during the refurbishment of floors 1 to 11. While more officials than originally foreseen could be affected as a result by noise and other disruptions to the working environment caused by the refurbishment, the logistical, technical and security challenges related to operating in two separate buildings would be eliminated. In any case, the Office would ask the project pilot to endeavour to schedule outside regular office hours the works that cause noise and other disruptions. Not constructing the prefabricated building would also eliminate the considerable construction-related risks. Another advantage is the fact that officials and visitors will continue to have regular access to the conference room area and the catering, banking and postal services in the building and that existing security arrangements can be maintained.
6. In the light of the financial, logistical, technical and working environment considerations outlined above, and considering the new constraints and risks related to the construction of an annex, the best option to achieve the objectives of refurbishing the building within the time frame and budget approved by the Governing Body is to proceed with the renovation

¹ GB.309/PFA/BS/2(&Corr.).

of floors 1 to 11 in three consecutive phases, thus avoiding the need to construct a temporary annex. The project plans will be adjusted accordingly. More details on the actual planning of the refurbishment of floors 1 to 11 and the final cost estimates will become available once the project pilot has completed drafting the corresponding detailed specifications and plans.

Geneva, 19 March 2012