



## **Africa Hall Renovation Project**

### **Information Note**



**2016-2024**

## **Background**

Africa Hall, since its conception more than half a century ago, is a truly living symbol of African history, unity and culture. It also represents one of the most prominent examples of African architectural heritage.

The Hall, which is the first of a collection of twenty buildings making up the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Compound, was conceived and donated by the Emperor of Ethiopia Haile Selassie in the early 1960s. The initial vocation of the building was to create a paramount place for African art and culture.

Along its lifetime, Africa Hall became a famous landmark venue for pan-African and African Renaissance events. It is the birthplace of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which is now the African Union (AU), and whose founding Charter was signed in the Hall in 1963.

Its actual status made it more and more inadequate to respond at exigencies linked to its high function, particularly for high level meetings and conferences. The signs of its half a century lifetime are evident and not any more responding to the highest standards which it deserves.

The United Nations launched a campaign of modernization of its facilities - already completed in New York, ongoing in Geneva, Bangkok and to be implemented in the rest of main United Nations Offices in the world, to enhance technological endowment, to upgrade functionality as well as to ensure matching highest safety/security standards.

The General Assembly approved the Project to renovate Africa Hall entrusting ECA of its implementation in 2015. The General Assembly also encouraged ECA to continue seeking for voluntary contribution by Member States as well as the private sector.

The governing structure looks for the external advice of the Ethiopian Government, the African Union, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Member States representatives to ensure wide and solid background as well as participative process.

ECA set up a dedicated office to manage the implementation of the Project, counting on a Stakeholder Committee and United Nations Headquarters oversight. The management is based on a participative approach, looking for a wide and continuous consultation, which involve professionals as well as institutions representing the civil society.

## **Objective**

The aim is to transform Africa Hall to a rejuvenated facility, complying with the highest international standards for conference facilities. As part of preserving and restoring the historical and cultural values embedded in its architecture, the other objective of the project is to include a permanent exhibition to make Africa Hall one of the leading destinations in Addis Ababa and highlight its significant role in modern African history and culture.

## **Results**

The expected results are:

- (a) Structural upgrade, resilience, safe and comfortable functionality;
- (b) Plenary Hall and related Offices technological upgrade;
- (c) Heritage conservation, restoration and preservation of historical elements;
- (d) Visitors' Centre and permanent exhibition;
- (e) External work and landscape, including new entrance and reserved parking.

## **Program**

Following the feasibility and preliminary studies, the conceptual design including the definition of the detailed scope has been developed and completed in 2014, leading to the Project approval by the General Assembly in 2015 and the project set up in 2016.

The final design has been developed through 2017, followed by the procurement processes to select the companies in charge of the refurbishment and construction; the implementation of the works started beginning of 2018. Regrettably due to several factors (e.g. approvals, contractor failure, COVID) it's facing several constraints which are causing slippages in the plan and 3 years accrued delays. The initial target to complete the refurbishment and ancillary works by 2021 shifts and the reopening of the Africa Hall is now planned for 2024.

Finally, the Project foresees to have a transitional period to ensure acquaintance on operation and maintenance, as well as set up functioning of the newly created Visitors' centre. The Project close out is expected for beginning of 2025.

## **Budget**

The overall budget funded by the General Assembly for the implementation of the Project is estimated at 56.9 million US dollars, of which three quarter for construction, 15% for management and the rest as contingency provision.

Considering impact of the accrued delays, current risk analysis shows around half (49%) probability that the project may be completed within the financial forecast, with high risk of cost overruns. ECA, supported by HQ and independent risk management, are identifying and implementing several mitigations to reduce the risk impact.

## **Contributions**

The GA has encouraged ECA to continue seeking for voluntary contribution to offset the provision made by the UN. Voluntary contributions should be aimed as well to enhance and enrich the Project, confirming the commitment of the Member States; and widening the Champions of the Project to other stakeholders, public or private.

Donation may be in kind such as the land donated by the Host Government, a commemorative book pledged by Italy or documents/memories related to Pan-Africanism; or contribution in cash such as has been the case of Mali to adopt the restoration of one artwork; and Switzerland to cover transitional costs.

Annexes:

- *Progress update sheet*
- *Project timeline*
- *Project cost plan*

## Progress Update Sheet

| <b>Background</b>                                      |  | <i>key dates</i>       |
|--|--|------------------------|
| Approval by GA (resolution 70/248)                     |  | Dec 2015               |
| Project Start up – Team recruitment                    |  | March 2016 to Feb 2017 |
| Governance: Stakeholder Committee & Advisory Board     |  | Oct 2016 and Jul 2017  |
| Project Specific Agreement – Privileges and procedures |  | April 2018             |
| Land Donation by Host Country                          |  | December 2019          |
| Current Project Completion estimate (36 months delays) |  | Dec 2023               |
| Cost estimate (yearly readjusted and noted by the GA)  |  | 56.9 M USD             |

| <b>Design &amp; Construction</b>   |   |  | <i>key dates</i>                       |
|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Stage 3<br>Design & documentation  | Early / decanting works                   |  | October 2016                           |
|                                    | Main works                                |  | September 2017                         |
|                                    | Art works                                 |  | September 2017 (further reviewed)      |
|                                    | Conference engineering                    |  | August 2020                            |
|                                    | Permanent exhibition                      |  | Ongoing (1 <sup>st</sup> quarter 2022) |
| Stage 4<br>Construction activities | Early decanting works – completed – DLP   |  | Jan 2018 to July 2021                  |
|                                    | Main renovation works – original contract |  | June 2019 to Feb 2020                  |
|                                    | - retendering                             |  | Mar 2022 to December 2023              |
|                                    | Conference engineering                    |  | Jun 2022 to Dec 2023                   |
|                                    | Artworks restoration                      |  | Mar 2022 to Dec 2023                   |
|                                    | Permanent exhibition and Visitor Centre   |  | Jan to Dec 2023                        |

| <b>Procurement processes</b>   |  | <i>key dates - status</i>                      |
|--|--|--|
| Lead Consultancy for Design, documentation, site admin, technical advisory & project close out |  | Oct 2016 – Dec 2024<br>(extended and adjusted) |
| Early decanting works  |  | March 2017 to Jan 2018                         |
| Main works – original solicitation and award (then terminated in Feb 2020)                     |  | Oct 2017 - May 2019                            |
| - re-solicitation due to termination original contractor                                       |  | April 2020 to December 2021                    |
| Artworks - Lot A – retendered twice- HCC rejected, proposed sole sourcing                      |  | Award ongoing – Mar 2022                       |
| - Lot B & D – ready for award – on hold since Oct 2019   |  | Award ongoing – Mar 2022                       |
| Conference Engineering – Eol completed in 2019   |  | August to Mar 2022                             |
| Visitor Center - Permanent exhibition  |  | Planning for 2022                              |

| <b>Voluntary contribution</b>           |  | <i>(update)</i>                     |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| Mali                                    | - cash - to be used for artworks restoration                     | 52 k USD – 2018                     |
| Switzerland                             | - cash - to be used for set up functioning of the Visitor Center | 100 k Swiss Franc – pledge for 2023 |
| Ethiopia                                | - in kind - plot to be used for visitor parking                  | 3,000 sqm – 2019                    |
| Italy                                   | - in kind – book for 60 <sup>th</sup> anniversary                | Pledged June 2021                   |
| Campaign                                | - ES Note Verbale to Africa Member States                        | 2016 and 2017                       |
|   | - Showcase at COM  | March 2018                          |
|   | - Africa Union initiative for artworks and memories              | 2019 pending responses              |
| Specific Plan for resource mobilization |  | Finalized 2021– to be implemented   |

| <b>Next steps - pending issues</b>                                 |  | <i>(tentatively planned for)</i> |
|--|--|----------------------------------|
| Main works - Complete award and start implementation               |  | March 2022                       |
| Artworks - Complete award for all Lots                             |  | March 2022                       |
| AV-IT-conference engineering – evaluation and award                |  | June 2022                        |
| start implementing resource mobilization plan                      |  | February 2022                    |
| Finalizing permanent exhibition design, documentation and strategy |  | June 2022                        |

Table 1 (\*)

**Project timeline**

| Project Timeline                                |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Activities                                      | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
| <b>Project Approval (A/RES/70/248)</b>          |      | ■    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Preparation and Design (Stage 1 &amp; 2)</b> |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Appraisal and Design Brief                      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Concept Design                                  |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Design brief, concept and Development           |      | ■    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Team set up and consultancy negotiation         |      | ■    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Pre-Construction (Stage 3)</b>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Production and Tender Documentation             |      | ■    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Tender Action                                   |      |      | ■    |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| <b>Construction (Stage 4)</b>                   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Early/decanting works                           |      |      |      | ■    |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Main (renovation) works                         |      |      |      | ■    |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Hi-tech, exhibition and Art-works               |      |      |      |      |      |      | ■    |      |      |      |
| <b>Project Closeout (Stage 5)</b>               |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|   |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

**Legend:**

- Project schedule envisaged in the report of the Secretary-General (A/75/319) - August 2020  
 ■ Current/Revised project schedule (January 2022)

(\*) *Figures updated in January 2022*

Table 2 (\*\*)

**Project Cost Plan**

|  |                   |             |                           |
|--|-------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Construction costs</b>                                      | <b>44,500,000</b> | <b>78%</b>  | <b>status</b>             |
| Early/decanting works (relocation of actual tenants)           | 2,500,000         | 5.6%        | completed (DLP)           |
| Main building, code compliance and site set up                 | 23,500,000        | 52.8%       | ongoing                   |
| Infrastructures connections and external works                 | 2,500,000         | 5.6%        | (re)solicitation          |
| visitor center and parking                                     | 2,000,000         | 4.5%        | ongoing                   |
| high tech equipment - endowment                                | 4,000,000         | 9.0%        | solicitation              |
| heritage - art works restoration, exhibition and visitor entry | 2,200,000         | 4.9%        | design & tender           |
| Professional services - design and supervision                 | 7,700,000         | 17.3%       | extended up to completion |
| Professional services - risk management                        | 100,000           | 0.2%        | ongoing                   |
| <b>Project management</b>                                      | <b>7,900,000</b>  | <b>14%</b>  |                           |
| Dedicated team (at ECA nad HQ)                                 | 6,700,000         | 84.8%       | up to Sept 2023           |
| Consultancies / expertise (technical and management)           | 350,000           | 4.4%        | ongoing                   |
| security related cost (related to construction site)           | 850,000           | 10.8%       | ongoing                   |
| <b>Contingency (including escalation)</b>                      | <b>4,500,000</b>  | <b>8%</b>   | reduced by 40% s          |
| <b>GENERAL TOTAL</b>   | <b>56,900,000</b> | <b>100%</b> |                           |

(\*\*) *updated cost plan presented to GA within the SG report for 76<sup>th</sup> session*