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English only

Note by the Secretary-General

RESULTS OF AN ARCHITECT'S STUDY OF FEASIBILITY FOR A REPLACEMENT OF ITU VAREMBE BUILDING

Summary

This report is a summary of Architect's study of the feasibility of constructing a replacement for ITU Varembe building on or adjacent to the site of the existing building: several variants are studied and cost-estimated. One further variant considered is the renovation and extension of the existing building.

Action required

This report is transmitted to PP-14 for information.

References

[C13/INF/18](#), [C14/92](#), [C14/50](#), [C14/75](#), [PP-14/57\(Rev.1\)](#)

Background and Study Description

As stated to Council 2014, ITU has commissioned a specialist architect to perform a preliminary study for the replacement of the Varembe building, in accordance with the Swiss Engineer and Architect association standard SIA 102. That study has now reported.

The principal goals of the study were to:

- Analyse the characteristics of the site;
- Highlight ITU requirements;
- Assess the feasibility of the programme in terms of data, environmental factors, laws and regulations, easements and any local requirements;
- Verification of feasibility;
- Development and analysis of concepts in the form of polyhedral sketches;
- Study of variants, with summary cost estimates and comparative analysis;
- Summary assessment of construction costs (with an estimation bound of +/- 15%), given the calculation of volumes and surfaces;
- Consideration of financial feasibility;
- Collection of data and documentation needed for the next stages of a project;

After initial discussions with the Host Country, two possible cadastral land parcels were considered to site the building: the current ITU parcel and (after consultation with the Host Country) an adjoining parcel including the underground "Parking des Nations" car park.

Several alternatives were analyzed:

- Conserving the existing building carcass, with extensive renovation and raising of the height by the addition of further floors;
- Construction of an adjacent new building followed by demolition of the old Varembe;
- Construction of a new building partially adjacent and demolition of Varembe in several stages (to lessen the need for temporary relocation of staff);
- Demolition of Varembe and subsequent construction of a new building on the same site.

There were many parameters in the selection and analysis of each scenario, including: costs of compliance (in terms of fire safety, evacuation, accessibility, earthquake resistance, etc ...) and improvement of thermal performance for the existing building; cost of moving users during the construction period; cost of demolition and reconstruction; convenience of work for Varembe building users; noise during the construction period; total duration of the project; need to establish new planning agreements; aesthetics of a future building and overall harmony of the site.

Comparative studies were conducted on the approximate cost of each variant, taking into account: the cost of demolition; construction costs; operating equipment costs, landscaping

costs, additional building project costs (being the organization of an international architectural competition, adaption of local planning rules; costs of permits and taxes), and various contingencies calculated based on 15% of the work and relocation costs. To these costs must be added decoration and fixed furniture costs, with the total fitting under a ceiling of CHF 150 million as previously submitted to the Council.

Conclusion

According to the feasibility study analyses, the building programme envisioned by ITU is compatible with the available land parcel(s) and with ITU's projected costings. In the light of advantages and disadvantages represented by each variant and the cost analysis, it is strongly recommended to replace the old with a new Varembe building rather than to renovate and extend the existing building.

There is no technical impediment to allowing an international architecture competition to consider solutions that comprise a building siting that includes a small amount (to be defined) of the neighbouring parcel containing the Parking des Nations, assuming Host Country agreement for the legal and planning issues. All variants considered in the study are technically feasible, meaning that such a competition can be expected to generate maximum interest and architectural innovation.

For more information, please visit the following URL:

<https://www.itu.int/en/plenipotentiary/2014/ties/Documents/Architect-study-Varembe-II.pdf>
