

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND FINANCE

Twenty-fifth Session

PLANS FOR THE IOM HEADQUARTERS BUILDING:

UPDATE 2

PLANS FOR THE IOM HEADQUARTERS BUILDING: UPDATE 2

Background

1. At its 109th Session, the Council adopted Resolution No. 1373 of 27 November 2018 on a plan for the Headquarters building, which requested the Director General: (a) to prepare and submit a loan application to finance the construction of a new IOM Headquarters building at a preliminary estimated amount of CHF 68.1 million for consideration by the Government of Switzerland; (b) in consultation with the relevant authorities of the host State, to develop a construction project detailing the requirements and the total costs; and (c) to submit the total project cost to the Council for approval when finalized.

2. The Administration is committed to providing regular updates to Member States and this document provides a second update since Resolution No. 1373 was adopted, covering the period from May to October 2019.

Selection of a consultancy firm

3. Following the approval of a drawdown from the Operational Support Income reserve, as outlined in document S/24/6, the Administration has engaged Irbis Consulting SA as a project consultant (*assistant maître d'ouvrage*), through a tendering process, for a period of six months from 15 August 2019. The consultants have been tasked with compiling the necessary documents to support the loan application for the first phase of the project (architectural studies and the international architectural design competition). The agreement outlines services to be delivered by specific dates during the contract period.

4. The Administration has discussed working arrangements and guidance for the consultants with regard to the completion of the project study loan application.

5. The core responsibilities of the consulting firm include the following tasks:

- (a) Produce documentation to support the application for a study loan from the Swiss authorities;
- (b) Develop and structure a budget for the loan, by analysing, assessing and adapting the currently available estimates from the preliminary study, followed by an analysis of work to be done under the study loan;
- (c) Undertake a needs analysis, ensuring the participation of staff and other stakeholders in the process;
- (d) Assist the Organization in defining its needs by developing different occupancy models;
- (e) Draft the project schedule, including timelines for the various management structures;
- (f) Draft tendering documents for the international architectural design competition;
- (g) Provide a comparative analysis of possible approaches and procedures to guide the selection of the most suitable companies (e.g. the architectural design competition and selection procedures for companies specializing in mechanical and electrical engineering, including plumbing);
- (h) Undertake a risk assessment and establish a framework for mitigation.

6. The consultants have, at the request of the Administration, proposed some options for further broadening the scope of the consultation process with staff and other stakeholders, which may require additional time to complete. The consultancy firm has briefed the Director General and the Headquarters Building Steering Committee on its workplan and how it intends to accomplish its tasks.

Recruitment of the Project Director

7. The recruitment process for the Project Director has been a priority during the project start-up phase. A candidate had been selected and was scheduled to start work in November. However, after initially accepting the post, being offered a contract and undergoing all the necessary medical clearance, the candidate suddenly turned down the offer. The Administration is reviewing options to fill the position.

8. Once appointed, the Project Director will run the project from start to finish, being responsible for its day-to-day management and the development of the resource requirement plans for each phase, including funding and staffing needs. Their other duties will include the development of a detailed temporary relocation solution and business continuity plan.

Coordination with the Swiss authorities

9. The Administration is consulting with the relevant host Government officials for guidance on the loan process to ensure that the loan application conforms with all host State requirements, and is receiving support on technical matters related to the project from the Building Foundation for International Organizations (FIPOI).

10. A Coordination Committee and an Operational Group will serve as part of the formal channels of communication between the host Government and IOM.

11. The Coordination Committee, established for representatives of the host Government and IOM to discuss political, financial and legal questions pertaining to the project, held its first meeting on 10 October. Participants included representatives of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the canton of Geneva and FIPOI. The host Government reaffirmed its support for the project and IOM reiterated its commitment to carry out the project on time and on budget, in close coordination with Member States. The Operational Group, which will discuss operational and technical issues, will be established in due course.

Next steps

12. The Administration considers the recruitment of a Project Director to be of paramount importance and will endeavour to fill the position as soon as possible.

13. Having engaged the project consultant, the focus now is on consulting with staff to determine their needs and translate them into project requirements by developing different occupancy models.

14. Limited office space continues to be a problem, so the Administration will integrate interim measures to address this into its plans, while taking into account the move to swing space that will take place in a few years once the loan application process is complete.