



## FOURTH ITEM ON THE AGENDA

**Report of the Building Subcommittee**

1. The Building Subcommittee of the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee met on 11 November 2002, chaired by Ms. M. Gomes dos Santos (Government, Brazil), who also acted as Reporter. Mr. K. Ahmed (Worker member) was elected as Worker Vice-Chairperson and Mr. M. Barde (Employer member) was elected Employer Vice-Chairperson.

**Premises for the Regional Office  
for the Americas, Lima**

2. The Subcommittee had before it a paper<sup>1</sup> describing the progress made in the project for new premises for the Regional Office in Lima.
3. Mr. D. Lima Godoy (Employer member) recalled the intervention by Mr. B. Botha before the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee in March 2002, expressing concerns about the need to build a new Regional Office in Lima; he was more confident now that the project had started well. However, in the light of the cost estimates submitted by the architect, he requested that the estimate of US\$1,850,000 be respected and that the project remain within the limits accepted by the Governing Body in March 2002.
4. Mr. Ahmed (Worker Vice-Chairperson) inquired whether the new building would meet the future requirements of the Regional Office and specifically asked to be informed of the number of officials who would be working in the building.
5. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom requested additional details on the office layout and the advantages of open-plan or individual offices, and wanted to know the difference these options would present to the Office in terms of cost. She also asked whether steps had been taken to appoint those in charge of the project (project supervisor and administrator).
6. Mr. Blondel (Worker member) was pleased to note that the Peruvian Government, by making office space available during construction of the new premises, was willing to contribute to the project of the new ILO building and to approve the selected site. Noting

<sup>1</sup> GB.285/PFA/BS/1.

that the project evaluation was due to be completed in mid-February 2003, he trusted that this evaluation would be submitted to the Governing Body in March 2003 before any decision was taken. He thought that the Employers' proposal to limit building costs so as not to exceed the limit decided upon by the Governing Body in March 2002 was sound.

7. The representative of the Government of Kenya expressed his satisfaction with the project presentation and asked whether deadlines had been presented in writing and if the estimates contained hidden costs.
8. Mr. Boracino (architect selected for the project), told the Subcommittee that estimates had been drawn up with the greatest care and that, based on his experience, there should be no cost overruns. Regarding the interior of the building, flexibility had been built in so that either an open or closed layout could be envisaged.
9. The representative of the Director-General (Mr. Girod, Chief of the Internal Administration Bureau) confirmed that the Regional Office in Lima would house up to 130 officials over the next five years. He noted the Subcommittee's request that the evaluation of submissions be submitted to the Governing Body for decision in March 2003. As to the project itself, it would be administered by INTER, as was the custom, in cooperation with the Regional Office. Regarding the layout, Mr. Girod pointed out that, according to estimates, an open-space layout would save \$20,000.
10. The representative of the Government of United Kingdom wanted to know if the staff of the Regional Office had been involved in this project and drew the Office's attention to the fact that the choice of layout could have a significant cost impact.
11. The Director of the Regional Office (Mr. Muñoz) was pleased to note the considerable interest shown by the Peruvian Government in the new premises of the Regional Office in Lima. The Government had undertaken to provide the ILO with offices throughout the construction period for the new building, in an extremely well-located office block. The speaker also stated that, since the Governing Body had given its authorization to go ahead with the building, he had involved the staff of the Regional Office in the project by setting up an advisory body, in which regional representatives of the ILO Staff Union participated. The architect had therefore designed the office layout in perfect cooperation with the staff. He felt that the new building had been designed in such a way as to meet all future ILO requirements.
12. Mr. Blondel (Worker member) commented that, in the light of the information provided by the representative of the Director-General on the pre-selection of contractors submitting bids, companies should be chosen not only on their reputation, solvency and technical capability, but also bearing in mind safety requirements and companies' reputations regarding employment standards.
13. Mr. Lima de Godoy (Employer member) agreed with Mr. Blondel and stated that respect for labour standards was also the principal concern of the Employers.
14. ***In view of the above considerations, the Building Subcommittee proposes that the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee request the Governing Body to congratulate Mr. Boracino on the quality of his project, and express its wish to continue the project in accordance with the stated estimate of \$1,850,000, and not exceeding the maximum decided by the Governing Body in March 2002. The result of the bidding evaluation process for the construction of the building will be submitted to the next session of the Governing Body in March 2003 for decision.***

## Ensuring optimal use of the ILO headquarters building

15. The Building Subcommittee had before it a paper<sup>2</sup> outlining the conclusions reached by the architects commissioned to examine the occupancy of the ILO headquarters building. This paper also referred to the development plan envisaged by the local authorities on ILO lots that might have a considerable effect on the Office's rights to build.
16. The representative of the Director-General made a presentation, which addressed the current building rights of the ILO and the local authorities' master plan, known as *Le Jardin des Nations*, for the area in which the ILO is located. This plan is to be made available for public inspection between 25 November and 25 December 2002. He pointed out that a second plan, called *La Campagne du Grand Morillon*, would complement the master plan. He also presented the study undertaken by the architects, J. Schaer and C. Sjoestedt on ways to ensure optimal use of the ILO headquarters building which recommended improvements to various aspects of security within the building and a reorganization of its internal layout in accordance with new regulations.
17. Mr. Ahmed (Worker Vice-Chairperson) enquired about the costs of reorganizing the internal layout and the number of extra people that could be accommodated as a result. He wondered how a service would function if all its archives were reorganized.
18. Mr. Barde (Employer Vice-Chairperson) strongly supported taking action with regard to both the local authorities and FIPOI (Swiss Property Foundation for the International Organizations) in order to protect the building rights of the ILO. He requested a report which would address the issues of staff safety, fire security and the optimum use of space within headquarters. Information was also required about the number of people housed in the building who were not actually employed by the ILO and about those members of staff who were allocated an office while away on mission. Any proposal to modify the internal layout should consider the possibility of open-plan office space.
19. Mr. Blondel (Worker member) inquired about the number of people who would be based in the temporary accommodation (Pavillon). If improved security measures were necessary, it would be better to separate the two issues of "security" and "use of space" and cost out each separately. All necessary measures should be taken to accommodate handicapped people. The speaker wished to know the proportion of ILO staff at headquarters to staff in field offices.
20. The representative of the Government of the United Kingdom stressed the need for the ILO to retain complete flexibility with regard to the use of its property. Priority had to be given to improving fire security and evidence had to be provided that reorganizing office space was financially justified – in the event that only fire safety measures could be envisaged. IMEC had already expressed its concern about the use made of space within headquarters and would like to see a strategic plan addressing office space retained in Geneva compared to that in the field.
21. The representative of the Government of Japan requested that a comparison be made with other international organizations in Geneva with regard to their approach to the use of space.

<sup>2</sup> GB.285/PFA/BS/2.

22. In answer to the questions raised, the representative of the Director-General explained that modifications to the internal layout could lead to a 5 per cent increase in the number of staff housed at a cost of \$2,300,000 per floor. The temporary accommodation would house 50 members of staff as well as provide training rooms and some rooms for unspecified projects.
23. *In the light of the above considerations, the Building Subcommittee, very concerned by the new master plan proposed by the Geneva authorities, proposed that the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee request the Governing Body to instruct the Director-General to:*
- (a) *continue negotiating with the competent Swiss authorities and obtain, as a matter of urgency, explanations concerning the plans known as Le Jardin des Nations and La Campagne du Grand Morillon;*
  - (b) *if necessary, inform the authorities concerned of the ILO's wish to retain complete flexibility with regard to the building rights attached to its properties, including the right to envisage extensions to the headquarters building or the construction of new buildings; and*
  - (c) *produce a detailed proposal for the refurbishment and use of the internal layout of the ILO building, taking into consideration Swiss and European standards regarding fire and other safety measures, as well as a project for layout taking account of the new technologies, ergonomics and provisions with respect to open-plan offices. These recommendations should be backed by specific details (costs, numbers of people using the building and the stages involved in both the installation of security and the reorganization of internal space).*

## **Other questions:**

### **Temporary accommodation at headquarters**

24. The Building Subcommittee reviewed a report on the temporary accommodation at headquarters known as the Pavillon.<sup>3</sup> The Geneva authorities had, however, insisted on higher fire safety standards that had resulted in an unforeseen cost increase of some Sw.frs.383,000 (\$216,300).
25. In answer to questions raised, the representative of the Director-General explained that the Geneva building authorities did not provide the ILO with their higher safety specifications until April, a month after the previous session of the Governing Body. In fact the application of fire safety standards could vary according to the nature and type of construction which even specialized construction firms could not foresee in advance.

<sup>3</sup> GB.285/PFA/BS/3/1.

**26. In light of the above, the Building Subcommittee proposes to the Programme, Financial and Administrative Committee that it recommend to the Governing Body that it agree that the additional cost of Sw.frs.383,000 (\$216,300) for the construction of the temporary office building be charged to the Building and Accommodation Fund.**

Geneva, 12 November 2002.

*Points for decision:* Paragraph 14;  
Paragraph 23;  
Paragraph 26.