



## Governing Body

332nd Session, Geneva, 8–22 March 2018

GB.332/PFA/INF/1

**Programme, Financial and Administrative Section**  
*Programme, Financial and Administrative Segment*

**PFA**

**FOR INFORMATION**

## ILO premises in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

**Summary:** The purpose of the document is to bring to the attention of the Governing Body issues concerning the ILO premises in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

**Author unit:** Internal Services and Administration Department (INTSERV).

**Related documents:** None.



## Introduction

1. This document provides an update on the situation of the ILO's premises in Abidjan. In 1989, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire gifted a building and piece of land to the ILO to house its Regional Office for Africa. After substantial restoration and construction works, the Regional and Subregional Offices assumed occupancy of these premises in 1991. Following the post-election situation in Côte d'Ivoire in 2000, the Governing Body was informed, in June 2005, of the administrative decision of the Director-General in full cooperation with the Governments of Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and Senegal, to temporarily relocate the ILO Subregional Office to Dakar, Senegal, and the RO–Africa to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia with effect from 1 July 2005. According to this decision, “the temporary move of the Abidjan Office to Addis Ababa would remain in effect as long as it was felt to be necessary, and the situation would be reviewed with the Governments of the Côte d'Ivoire and Ethiopia on a regular basis”. Staff were relocated to Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Cameroon and Senegal. In addition some staff were seconded to technical cooperation projects within the region, and a small number remained in Abidjan.
2. In March 2015, the decision was taken to return to Abidjan.
3. In July 2016, with the imminent relocation of the Regional Office, an assessment of the property was carried out and revealed that the premises did not comply with the basic standards of the United Nations Security Management System (UNSMS) nor did it meet acceptable standards of office functionality. The access to the property, as well as the structure of the buildings and the obsolescence of the technical installations could not ensure the safety, security and well-being of the ILO personnel.
4. The property consists of a plot of land of 2,148 square metres with two buildings. The main building has an area of approximately 1,100 square metres, built initially as a residential construction and converted into offices in 1991. The annex building with an area of approximately 700 square metres was built in 1998 by the ILO to respond to a growing portfolio of activities of the Regional Office. Neither building has undergone any major renovation since the 1991 conversion or 1998 construction.
5. In view of the condition of the property, since September 2016, the Regional and Country Office staff have been accommodated in space sublet from the African Development Bank in a newly refurbished office tower in Le Plateau, owned by the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, the lease of which is valid until September 2018.

## Nature of the rehabilitation works

6. In addition to the security and safety issues referred to above, the major deficiencies of the ILO buildings are:
  - (a) structural cracks on external walls and major water infiltration inside the buildings; poor or non-existent insulation and an obsolete glazed system on the main façade;
  - (b) obsolete electricity, telephone and data networks;
  - (c) highly inadequate water and cooling systems; and
  - (d) the layout of the main building, adapted from a residential scheme, does not optimize use of the space while the interior finishes are worn out.

7. In 2016 it was discovered that no title of property had been officially transmitted to the ILO at the time of the donation of the property. The Office has therefore requested the support of the Government to formalize the transfer of title without which, the ILO would be unable to commit funds to renovate or redevelop the property.

## Options

8. The following options to address the situation have been studied:
  - (a) *The renovation of the current premises.* This option, with an estimated total cost of 3.357 billion CFA francs (XOF) (US\$ 6.38 million), would only deal with the structural issues and the technical installations. The premises would still not fully meet the standards of the UNSMS and would not make optimal use of the available office space. If the premises were renovated, the building and its land would have a value of XOF4.72 billion (\$8.97 million). This could, however, result in some 640 square metres space available to potentially rent out which could generate an estimated rental income of \$180,000 per year.
  - (b) *The demolition of the main building and the construction of an extension to the annex.* This option, with an estimated cost of XOF3.17 billion (\$6 million), consists of the demolition of the main building, the construction of a smaller main building, the renovation of the annex building and the construction of its extension. This option would result in a building with a standardized and modern floor layout, would also provide for full implementation of a disabled access strategy, a sustainable approach and would ensure full compliance with functional and safety and security standards. Once the works were finished, the building and its land would have a value of some XOF4.35 billion (\$8.25 million). Some 240 square metres would be available to potentially rent out which would generate an estimated rental income of \$72,000 per year.
  - (c) *The complete demolition of the two buildings and the reconstruction of a new building.* This option has been estimated at a total cost of \$8.3 million. Due to its high cost, this option is not considered to be viable.
  - (d) *The rental of alternative premises on a permanent basis.* In September 2016, an extensive market research was carried out to identify suitable temporary accommodation. It appeared that no commercial properties with sufficient office space, corresponding to the UNSMS recommendations and basic office requirements were available in Le Plateau, other than the current rented premises. In other regions of Abidjan, some residential villas were available for rent. However, such an option would have implied major investment costs to secure and adapt premises to ILO needs and was therefore not investigated further. In November 2017, a real estate study conducted by an independent real estate firm identified that by 2020, around 37,000 square metres of newly constructed office space would be available in the Plateau. This would provide more rental opportunities for the ILO as a tenant. However, should the ILO decide to keep their current building and make space available for renting out, as described in options (a) and (b), the ILO would need to compete for tenants in a rental market where there is plenty of new well-located office space available thus lowering the possibilities of renting out the ILO space.
  - (e) *The extension of the current lease agreement with the African Development Bank (AfDB).* The ILO's current lease agreement amounts to \$256,060 per year and will expire in August 2018. The ILO and the AfDB are discussing and finalizing arrangements for the extension of the lease beyond the current agreement.

- (f) *Other accommodation arrangements.* The Office has commenced discussions with the Government to explore other accommodation options. An exchange of land or a potential sale of the current property allowing a reinvestment in more suitable accommodation is one possible option to consider.
9. The Office will continue consideration of the various options and provide a further update to the Governing Body at its 334th Session (October–November 2018).