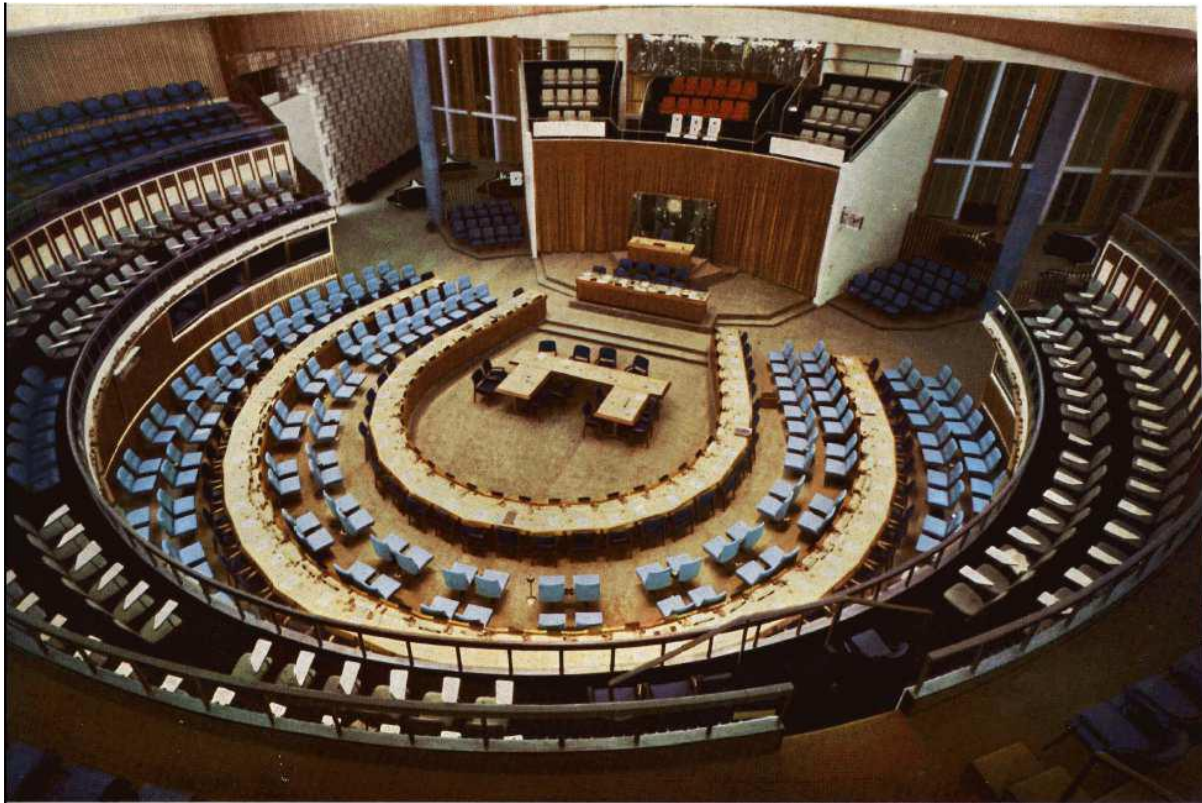




Information Note:

Africa Hall – The Mandate



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 Heritages.

The Hall, which is part of a collection of twenty buildings making up the ECA Compound, was built 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 resulted more and more inadequate to respond at exigencies linked to its high function, particularly for high level meetings and conferences.

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

The GA approved the Project to renovate Africa Hall entrusting UNECA of its implementation. The GA 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, UNESCO and the African Union to ensure wide and solid background as well as participative process.

UNECA set up a dedicated office to manage the implementation of the Project, counting on a Stakeholder Committee and HQ oversight.

Objective

The aim is to transform Africa Hall in 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 tourist destinations in Addis Ababa and highlight its significant role in modern African history.

Results

Expected AH Building Restoration results:

- Structural upgrade, resilience and Accessibility;
- Plenary Hall and related Offices technological upgrade;
- Heritage conservation: restoration and preservation of historical elements;
- Visitors' Centre and permanent exhibition;
- External work and landscape: including new entrance and reserved parking;