



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

17 March 2020

Excellency,

I wish to inform that in furtherance to my letters of 10 and 13 March 2020, and in light of recent guidance severely limiting the number of persons attending in-person meetings as a result of the continuing evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have decided to:

- i. Postpone the Commemorative meeting on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, scheduled for 23 March 2020;
- ii. Postpone the Commemorative meeting on the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, scheduled for 24 March 2020;
- iii. Postpone the informal meeting of the General Assembly to hear a briefing on the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, scheduled for 25 March 2020;
- iv. Postpone the eleventh session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA), scheduled for 6 April 2020 (see enclosed letter from Chair of OEWGA);
- v. Postpone the plenary meeting on Improving Global Safety, scheduled for 16 April 2020; and
- vi. Cancel all in-person meetings of the General Assembly mandated processes for the 74th session scheduled to be held between now and 17 April 2020. These processes will conduct their activities via alternative mechanisms.

Regarding postponements that require the General Assembly's concurrence, given that a plenary meeting to adopt key decisions planned for the end of this week cannot be held, I am attaching, herewith, a:

- i. Draft decision to postpone the upcoming substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to a period in 2021 to be decided by the Assembly, at its 75th session. Given that this draft decision was recommended to all regional groups and there were no objections, I wish to submit it for comments until 6 p.m. on 19 March 2020. Any comments and/or questions, should be directed to Eenam Gambhir, Senior Adviser at eenam.gambhir@un.org; and

- ii. Letter from the Chair of the International Law Commission proposing a draft decision to postpone the upcoming substantive session of the Commission is submitted herewith, for comments, until 6 p.m. on 19 March 2020. Any comments and/or questions should be directed to Xiaomei Li, Senior Adviser at xiaomei.li@un.org.

I would like to inform you that my Office has transitioned to virtual meetings. We look forward to the virtual meeting with Member States on 18 March 2020, at 1 p.m. to engage on issues concerning the technical aspects of business continuity and meetings management. I am also glad to mention that the Fifth Committee has successfully started conducting informal meetings via the United Nation's Video Conference Tool (VCT).

In conclusion, discussions are ongoing regarding other mandated events by the Assembly scheduled to take place after 17 April 2020. We will continue to look at business continuity with the General Committee, with focus on alternative ways to adopt key decisions, rather than through in-person meetings of the Assembly.

I would also like to avail of this opportunity to express my solidarity with Member States who are fighting COVID-19 and extend my sincere condolences for their loss.

Please accept Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York