



PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK

H.E. Amb. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande
President of the General Assembly

New York, 26 March 2020

Draft Decision Silence Procedure

Mr. President,

Thank you for your communication dated 24 March 2020 circulating a proposal to adopt decisions of the General Assembly by silence procedure in light of the exceptional circumstances under which we work in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Liechtenstein appreciates your leadership to ensure that the General Assembly can take decisions during this crisis and to enable the General Assembly to implement its mandate. With a view to ensure that this purpose is achieved, Liechtenstein would like to register the following understanding with respect to the draft decision:

1. Nothing in the draft decision can be interpreted as changing the relevant provisions in the rules of procedure pertaining to the General Assembly and to the General Committee, which remain valid and in place. It is Liechtenstein's clear understanding that the General Assembly continues to be the master of its own procedures, including on matters of decision-making.
2. The term "decision" only refers to decisions that are put forward by the President of the General Assembly. It does not include draft resolutions put forward by member States. The draft decision does therefore not, in any way or form, infringe of the sovereign right of member States to propose resolutions directly to the General Assembly and to seek their consideration by the General Assembly in an appropriate and timely manner.
3. In accordance with its established mandate, the General Committee cannot take on a function – also not temporarily – to become a clearing house for proposals to be submitted to the General Assembly. We therefore wish to state our understanding that "consultation" with the General Committee can thus not be interpreted as giving the General Committee any power that goes beyond the competencies it has under the established working conditions as well as under the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

4. The draft decision does not restrict, in any way or form, the provisions on the conduct of business, including voting, that are established by the rules of procedure. In particular, it does not prevent the General Assembly from making the necessary technical adjustments to implement the method of voting foreseen by rule 87 of the Rules of Procedure.

Liechtenstein would like to request that this understanding be duly reflected in the records of the adoption of the draft decision. To the extent that this understanding aligns with the general purposes of your draft decision, we are also of the view that clarifications from your side at the time of adoption would be beneficial to the future conduct of business in the General Assembly during the coming weeks and months. We look forward to working closely with you in these difficult times and I assure you of our fullest cooperation with you and your office for the benefit of the General Assembly, whose central role on the international stage has only increased by this crisis.

Sincerely,



Christian Wenaweser
Ambassador, Permanent Representative