



His Excellency Tijjani Muhammad-Bande
President of the 74th session of the
General Assembly
United Nations
New York

Our reference: SCHN

New York, 26.03.2020

Excellency,

Thank you for your letter dated 24 March 2020, circulating the draft decision enabling the General Assembly to adopt essential decisions under a silence procedure.

We recognize and welcome your efforts to re-establish the functioning of the General Assembly in the current and extraordinary circumstances. We would like, however, to draw your attention on a particular point of concern to our delegation.

We take note that in the current proposal, draft decisions will be placed under a silence procedure "after consultation with the General Committee". It is not clear how those consultations will occur and why such consultations are needed which are not a requirement as such. The General Assembly is the master of its own procedures and the General Committee cannot decide on behalf of the members of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly's Rules of Procedure clearly indicate the main functions of the General Committee: consider the provisional agenda, recommend the closing date of the session, and assist the President in the general conduct of the work of the General Assembly. They also mention that the General Committee shall not decide any political question and any revisions to resolutions by the General Committee are limited to form but not their substance. Moreover, considering the particular nature of the WEOG group, Switzerland does not consider itself represented in a legitimate way within or by the General Committee.

Our intention is not to break the silence procedure for the draft decision circulated. Nevertheless, we would like to put on record our concerns as highlighted above.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Jürg Lauber
Ambassador
Permanent Representative