



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

22 May 2020

Subject: Draft decision entitled “*Procedure for holding elections by secret ballot without a plenary meeting during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic*” (A/74/L. 67)

Excellency,

I wish to refer to my letter of 20 May 2020, and extend my appreciation for your support and constructive engagement. We are, indeed, facing the greatest challenge in the 75 years of our Organization and operating under extraordinary circumstances. As we contend with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, it is incumbent on us to work together to ensure that the United Nations continues to perform its essential functions, while mitigating the spread of COVID-19 and safeguarding public health.

Therefore, taking into account the comments received from Member States, and in accordance with General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 entitled, “*Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic*”, it is my pleasure to place under silence procedure, until Friday, 29 May 2020 at 6 p.m., the enclosed draft decision entitled “*Procedure for holding elections by secret ballot without a plenary meeting during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic*”, issued as document A/74/L.67, under agenda item 7 [Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items], and is available on Official Document System (<https://documents.un.org/prod/ods.nsf/home.xsp>) in all official languages.

I have been informed that the adoption of the draft decision (A/74/L.67) would not give rise to any budgetary implications.

In preparing the enclosed draft decision, I have been guided by the views expressed by Member States and advice from the United Nations Medical Director. Thus, the draft decision presents a practicable course forward. Be assured that your views on the need for a safe and suitable venue for staggered elections will continue to inform our planning. The health and safety of all remain our priority.

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

I will, via a letter to all Member States, at least ten working days prior to the first round of secret ballot for the elections, provide, inter alia, additional details regarding the conduct of the elections, including the management of tellers, the procedure to follow if the voter cannot attend and the Member State has to send the alternate voter, the protective personal equipment the voter will have to wear, the procedure for campaign related material pursuant to resolution 71/323 of 8 September 2017, and webcast of the elections.

Delegations wishing to make statements of explanations of position are invited to refer to the procedure annexed to this letter. Objections to the draft decision (A/74/L.67) should be done via a letter or note verbale addressed to the President of the General Assembly. Such correspondence should be sent via email to opga@un.org. Please clearly indicate the title of the draft decision in the subject line of the communication.

I avail myself 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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized, flowing line that ends in a small loop.

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

ANNEX

Explanation of position

After adoption, Member States wishing to make an explanation of position (except co-sponsors who are not allowed to make an explanation under rule 88 of the rules of procedure) may do so in any of the following ways, without prejudice to the delegations' rights under the rules of procedure to explain their position at the first plenary meeting to be held in order for the General Assembly to take note of the decision after the cessation of the precautionary measures as soon as the circumstance allow:

- Option 1: electronic versions of the statements in explanation of position received within two weeks of the end of the silence procedure will be posted on the [e-delegate](#) portal, under Plenary announcements. Please indicate the title of the draft decision/resolution in the subject line of the e-mail to be sent to Ms. Cassandra Price Taveras at pricec@un.org in the General Assembly Affairs Branch.
- Option 2: Member States can address their communication to the President of the General Assembly (to be sent to opga@un.org as per details in the letter). If received prior or within the hour following the end of the silence procedure, it will then be circulated in a subsequent letter from the President to all Member States. If received afterwards, it will be posted on the [e-delegate](#) portal. Please clearly indicate the title of the draft decision/resolution in the subject line of the communication.
- Option 3: Member States can also address a communication to the Secretary-General requesting the issuance of their communication.
 - Such communications should be addressed to the Secretary-General and signed by the permanent representative or chargé d'affaires, a.i., of the permanent mission to the United Nations.
 - The communications should indicate the session of the General Assembly, and the number and title of the agenda item under which circulation is requested, using the agenda of current session of the Assembly.
 - A scanned copy of the original signed communications (PDF version) as well as their Microsoft Word versions should be sent together to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (sgcentral@un.org) with a copy to gaab@un.org and dms@un.org to facilitate processing. If versions in any other United Nations official languages are available, they should be included electronically with a clear indication of the original language and/or which language versions are to be used for reference only.