



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14 May 2020

Excellency,

Sequel to my letter dated 12 May 2020, I have the pleasure to transmit herewith, a letter from H.E. Ambassador Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations and facilitator for the e-voting process (excluding elections).

The letter conveys the zero draft of the draft decision entitled, “Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly by a vote (excluding elections) without a plenary meeting during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”, for the consideration of delegations.

As hitherto informed, the next virtual informal consultation of the process will be held on Monday, 18 May 2020, at 3:00 p.m.

I 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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive script.

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

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

PERMANENT MISSION OF JAMAICA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



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14th May 2020

Excellency,

I write to you in my capacity as Facilitator of the informal consultations on the General Assembly voting process (excluding elections) during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. I thank all delegations for their constructive engagement during the first informal consultation convened on 11th May 2020.

Taking into consideration the comments and ideas provided by the delegations, I have the honour to circulate the zero draft of the draft decision entitled "Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly by a vote (excluding elections) without a plenary meeting during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic", which is attached to the present letter for your consideration and further discussion.

As announced in my letter dated 11th May 2020, I will hold the next informal consultation on Monday, 18th May at 3:00 p.m. via the Cisco WebEx platform. I continue to count on your active participation and support throughout this process.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Rattray".

E. Courtenay Rattray, Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Jamaica
to the United Nations

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

Draft decision submitted by the President of the General Assembly

Agenda item 7: Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly by a vote (excluding elections) without a plenary meeting during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic

The General Assembly,

Recalling its decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020,

(a) *Authorizes* the President of the General Assembly to put a proposal¹ to a vote without holding a plenary meeting in the following circumstances:

(i) In the event that a vote is requested by a Member State either during the silence procedure under decision 74/544 or thereafter if the silence was broken by means other than a request for a vote, notwithstanding every effort to reach agreement by consensus; or

(ii) In the event that a vote has become necessary instead of placing a proposal under a silence procedure pursuant to decision 74/544, after every effort to reach agreement by consensus has been made;

(b) *Decides* that the President of the General Assembly shall put a proposal to a vote in accordance with the arrangements below:

(i) The President of the General Assembly shall circulate a letter to all Member States announcing that a vote has been requested on a specific proposal and indicating the date and time at which a vote will commence; such a date and time shall be fixed in a manner that would allow at least 72 hours between the circulation of the letter by the President and the commencement of the vote;

(ii) No other action may be proposed in relation to the proposal after a vote on the proposal has commenced at the date and time announced by the President pursuant to subparagraph (i) above, except a point of order in connection with the actual conduct of the voting; this does not prevent the General Assembly from taking decisions on other proposals in parallel, including by a silence procedure pursuant to decision 74/544;

(iii) Member States may vote “yes”, “no” or indicate “abstain” through an electronic means specified by the President during the voting period, which shall be one hour;

¹ For the purpose of the present decision, the term “proposal” includes parts of a proposal, an amendment and a motion. The matters which may be put to the vote pursuant to this decision are listed in the annex to this decision.

(iv) The voting process shall be considered valid if a majority of the members of the General Assembly is present in the voting process²;

(v) Rules 82 to 86 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly shall continue to apply to any vote held under the present decision;

(vi) If the votes in favour reach the required majority, the decision shall be considered adopted, and the General Assembly shall take note of the decision at its first plenary meeting held after the cessation of the precautionary measures as soon as the circumstances allow;

(c) *Further authorizes* the President of the General Assembly, in the event that an amendment or a motion is proposed at least two hours in advance of the original date and time of the vote on a proposal announced by the letter of the President pursuant to subparagraph (b) (i) above, to immediately postpone the scheduled vote and take one of the following steps:

(i) The President will put the motion in question to a vote in accordance with the relevant rules of procedure of the General Assembly and paragraph (b) above;

(ii) If an amendment is proposed, the President shall circulate the amendment to all Member States; the amendment may be placed under a silence procedure pursuant to decision 74/544 or, if a vote is requested, shall be put to a vote in accordance with paragraph (b) above;

(d) *Decides* that if a point of order is raised during the voting period referred to in paragraph (b) (iii) above in connection with the actual conduct of the voting in accordance with rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the President shall suspend the vote and apply the following procedure:

(i) The point of order shall be decided by the President in accordance with rule 71; the President's ruling will be communicated by the President to all Member States indicating the time by which Member States may appeal against the ruling of the President, which shall be one hour from the time from which the communication was sent out;

(ii) If there is no appeal against the ruling during the specified timeframe, the President's ruling shall stand;

(iii) In the event of an appeal, the President will put the appeal to a vote in accordance with rule 71;

(iv) The President will communicate a new date and time at which the voting process will resume.

² (For information only; not for the draft decision) A new feature will be included in the e-recorded vote module and each Member State that opens the voting page on the e-recorded vote will be counted as being present for the voting process.

(e) *Decides* that the procedure set out in the present decision shall be in effect until the end of June 2020 unless extended.

Annex

Matters which may be put to the vote pursuant to the present decision

(a)

(b)

(c)

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