26 August 2020

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to transmit herewith, a letter from H.E. Mr. Yashar T. Aliyev, Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan, and H.E. Ms. Louise Blais, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada, co-facilitators overseeing the consultations on the modalities for the organisation of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

The aforementioned letter conveys the zero draft resolution on the modalities for the 31st Special Session of the General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its scope, format, date and outcome. The co-facilitators also invite you to the first informal consultation on the draft resolution scheduled for Monday, 31 August 2020, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Details pertaining to the virtual arrangements for the meeting will be circulated in due course.

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.

[Signature]

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

All Permanent Representatives and Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York
New York, 25 August 2020

H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande
President of the General Assembly
United Nations

Your Excellency,

With reference to your letter dated 17 August 2020 where you appointed us as Co-Facilitators of the modalities for the organisation of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, we have the honour to submit herewith the zero draft resolution entitled “Special session of the General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic”, to be considered under agenda item 123 “Strengthening the UN System”.

The main objective of the draft resolution is to decide on the modalities of the 31st Special Session of the General Assembly, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its scope, format, date and outcome.

In this context, we kindly request that you circulate this zero draft resolution to all Member States and observers for their consideration. We would welcome comments by Member States and observers in writing, if any, to be sent to:

Ms. Billur Ahmadova  
Focal Point  
b_ahmadova@mfa.gov.az

Ms. Sophie Galarneau  
Focal Point  
Sophie.galarneau@international.gc.ca

Following inclusive and meaningful consultations, our hope is to submit the draft resolution for adoption during the current Session.

We thank you and your office for your kind assistance in organizing the first informal consultations which will be held on Monday, August 31, from 16:00-18:00 via the Cisco WebEx Platform. The logistical information for participating in this meeting will be circulated in advance of the meeting.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration,

H.E. Mr. Yashar T. Aliyev  
Permanent Representative of Azerbaijan

H.E. Ms. Louise Blais  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada
Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on … September 2020

[...]

Special session of the General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 74/270 of 2 April 2020, entitled “Global solidarity to fight the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)”, and 74/274 of 20 April 2020, entitled “International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19”,

Expressing grave concern about the threat to human health, safety and well-being caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, which has spread all around the globe, as well as the unprecedented and multifaceted effects of the pandemic, including the severe disruption to societies, economies, global trade and travel and the devastating impact on the livelihoods of people, [PP2, A/RES/74/274]

Recognizing that the COVID-19 global pandemic requires a global response based on unity, solidarity and multilateral cooperation, [PP8, A/RES/74/274]

Reaffirming its commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism and its strong support for the central role of the United Nations system in the global response to COVID-19, [OP2, A/RES/74/270]

Noting that a majority of Member States of the United Nations have concurred with the request, submitted on behalf of the Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement, to convene a special session of the United Nations General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, at the level of Heads of State and Government,

Recalling its decisions S-31/1 of 15 July 2020, S-31/2 of 15 July 2020, S-31/3 of 15 July 2020, S-31/4 of 21 July 2020, S-31/5 of 21 July 2020 and S-31/6 of 21 July 2020,

1. Decides that the special session of the General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic at the level of Heads of State and Government shall be convened for 2 days, from 5 to 6 November 2020, at United Nations Headquarters in New York; [based on A/RES/74/276, OP1]
2. Also decides that the proceedings of the special session shall be governed by the rules of procedure of the General Assembly; [A/RES/67/250, OP2]

3. Decides that the organizational arrangements for the special session shall be as follows:

(a) The special session shall consist of (i) an opening segment, (ii) a general debate, (iii) two scientific and expert panels on economic, social and environmental impacts of COVID-19, taking into consideration also health and financing aspects, and on building resilience and ensuring that the response to COVID-19 advances the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and (iv) a closing segment;

(b) The opening of the special session shall include statements by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the President of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Security Council and the Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement;

(c) The general debate shall include statements by Member States, observers to the General Assembly and, time permitting, a limited number of representatives from relevant organizations attending the special session, in line with subparagraphs (d) and (e) below, selected by the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, with due regard for geographical balance and gender equity; the list of speakers shall be established in accordance with the established practices of the Assembly, and the time limit for the statements will be five minutes for individual delegations and seven minutes for statements made on behalf of a group of States; [based on A/RES/74/276, OP2(c)]

(d) Representatives of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council are invited to participate in the special session in accordance with the rules of procedure and established practice of the General Assembly; [A/RES/74/276, OP2(d)]

(e) In accordance with the rules of procedure and practice developed for other special sessions of the General Assembly, the President of the General Assembly shall draw up a list of other relevant representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, academic institutions, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders who may participate in the special session, taking into account the principles of transparency and equitable geographical representation, with due regard for meaningful participation of women for submission to Member States for their consideration on a non-objection basis; [A/RES/74/276, OP2(e)]

4. Also decides, without setting a precedent for future special sessions, that, in connection with the limitations recommended on meetings within the United Nations premises as precautionary measures aimed at containing the spread of COVID-19:

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1 In accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly, if there are speakers from other non-governmental organizations that are not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, this should be considered by Member States on a non-objection basis.

2 The list of proposed as well as final names will be brought to the attention of the General Assembly. Where a name is objected to, the objecting Member State will, on a voluntary basis, make known to the Office of the President of the General Assembly the general basis of its objections and the Office will share any information received with any Member State upon its request.
(a) Each Member State and observer to the General Assembly, as well as representatives from relevant organizations attending the special session, in line with subparagraphs (d) and (e) of paragraph 3 above, can submit a pre-recorded statement of their Heads of State or Government, Heads of Delegation or other dignitaries, which will be played in the General Assembly Hall during the opening and general debate of the special session, after introduction by their representative who is physically present in the Assembly Hall; [based on GA decision 74/562, para. (a)]

(b) In addition to the verbatim records of the special session, the President of the General Assembly will circulate as a document of the Assembly a compilation document of the statements delivered by Heads of State and Government or other dignitaries by means of pre-recorded statements during the special session and submitted to the President no later than the day on which the pre-recorded statement is played in the Assembly Hall; [based on GA decision 74/562, para. (b)]

(c) These procedures shall apply only to the meetings of the special session of the General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. [based on GA decision 74/562, para. (d)]

5. Further decides that the proceedings of the special session shall be webcasted, and encourages the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to give the highest visibility to the special session, through all relevant media platforms and information and communications technologies; [A/RES/74/269, OP 12]

6. Invites all observers to the General Assembly to participate in the special session at the highest possible level, [based on A/RES/74/269, OP6]

7. Further invites all relevant United Nations system entities, including United Nations funds, programmes, and specialized agencies and regional commissions, as well as relevant intergovernmental, regional and subregional organizations, to participate in the special session; [A/RES/74/276, OP5]

8. Requests the President of the General Assembly to prepare a summary to reflect the messages and actions from the general debate and scientific panels;

9. Decides that the special session shall be conducted within existing resources.

[... plenary meeting]

[... ... 2020]