



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9 September 2020

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to transmit herewith, a letter dated 9 September 2020 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 organization of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

The aforementioned letter conveys the revised version of the resolution on the modalities of the 31<sup>st</sup> 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 third informal consultations on the revised draft resolution scheduled for tomorrow, 10 September 2020, from 3 to 5 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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Tijjani Muhammad-Bande'.

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

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





New York, 9 September 2020

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

Your Excellency,

With reference to the *Resolution on the Special Session of the General Assembly in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic*, we would like to thank all delegations for their active engagement at the consultation held on Friday, 4 September. Again, we are thankful for your commitment to this important Special Session and for your contributions in the past few days to reach agreement on remaining issues.

We are pleased to share with you a revised version of the resolution for your consideration. Please find below additional context in support of key elements of this revised draft modalities resolution following the last consultation:

- **Interactive Dialogue**: This resolution is being presented under item 123 of the General Assembly “Strengthening the UN System”, and accordingly, the multidimensional nature of the COVID19 pandemic will be addressed through an interactive dialogue between on one end the Heads of the relevant UN agencies and entities, and on the other end member states, observers and civil society. This format is most encompassing in terms of subject matters and participation, while avoiding any PBIs. The aim of this important segment will be for the UN to demonstrate how it is working collaboratively as one. This is reflected in **OP3 a)** and **OP7**.
- **Participation of Civil Society**: Regarding **OP3 c)** in relation to the list of speakers and **OP3 e)** on participation, we have noted the directly differing views on non-objection. For having a non-objection procedure with greater transparency, we have suggested language that would require the objecting member state to make known the concrete basis of its objection to the Office of the President of the General Assembly in a timely manner. The Office will share that information upon request from a Member State.
- **Hybrid nature of the Special Session**: We wish to provide the following clarifications with respect to **OP4 a)**. The Special Session will be a combination of virtual participation (pre-recorded video statement) and in-person participation (one New York-based representative per delegation). Should a delegation decide not to submit a pre-recorded video statement, the representative in the General Assembly Hall can deliver the statement on behalf of the said delegation.
- **Dates**: Upon request from delegations and advice received from the Secretariat, the following dates, December 3-4, 2020, for the holding of the Special Session are being proposed. We trust that this will accommodate the concerns expressed to avoid any overlap with the work of the committees, also keeping in mind the situation of smaller delegations.



We thank you for circulating this revised draft version of the resolution and this letter, and for your kind assistance in organizing the third informal consultation which will be held on **Thursday, September 10, from 15:00-17:00** via the Cisco WebEx Platform. At that meeting, we plan to proceed with a line-by-line review of the draft modalities resolution with a view to close agreed paragraphs. The logistical information for participating in this meeting will be circulated in advance of the meeting.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Yashar T. Aliyev".

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Louise Blais".

H.E. Ms. Louise Blais  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada





# General Assembly

Distr.: General  
... September 2020

Seventy-fourth session  
Agenda item 123  
Strengthening of the United Nations system

## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on ... September 2020

[...]

### [74/....] **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”,

*Noting* with concern 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 that is people-centred, gender-responsive, with full respect for human rights, multidimensional, coordinated, inclusive and innovative, based on unity, solidarity and multilateral cooperation, [PP8, A/RES/74/274]

*Reaffirming* its commitment to international cooperation and multilateralism acknowledging the fundamental role of the United Nations system in catalysing and coordinating the comprehensive global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the central efforts of Member States therein;

*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



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will be held 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) presentation by and dialogue with the Heads of the WHO, FAO, UNFPA, UNDP, OCHA and other relevant UN agencies and entities ~~on their inter-agency~~ coordination efforts to address COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts, ~~(iv) two consecutive scientific and expert panels on economic, social and environmental impacts of COVID-19, taking into consideration, inter alia, 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 take place on the first day of the Special Session and shall include statements by Member States, Observer States and observers the European Union 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<sup>1</sup>, 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) Recalling the established practice 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 and the private sector 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 <sup>2</sup>; [A/RES/74/276, OP2(e), A/RES/74/269, OP8]

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<sup>1</sup> ~~In accordance with Recalling~~ 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. ~~Where a name is objected to, the objecting Member State shall make known in a timely manner to the Office of the President of the General Assembly the concrete basis of its objections and the Office will share any information received with any Member State upon its request.~~

<sup>2</sup> 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, shall~~ make known in a timely manner to the Office of the President of the General Assembly the general concrete basis of its objections and the Office will share any information received with any Member State upon its request.



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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:

(a) Each Member State, Observer State to the General Assembly and ~~observers —the European Union~~, 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. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his statement information about the implementation of the resolutions 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”,

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 information ~~and perspectives~~ presented during the UNGASS 31 ~~that will serve as input for the design and implementation of COVID-19 and future pandemics related strategies;~~

9. *Further requests* the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, to finalize the other organizational arrangements for the special session.

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

[... plenary meeting]  
[... .. 2020]