



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

17 September 2020

**Subject: 2nd plenary meeting of the General Assembly**

Excellency,

I have the honour to inform you that the 2nd plenary meeting of the General Assembly will take place on Friday, 18 September 2020, at 11 a.m., in the General Assembly Hall, UN Headquarters.

The Secretary-General's letter dated 7 July 2020 regarding the reopening of the UN Headquarters states that in the event that a meeting is to be held, "Occupational safety experts will be asked to complete a risk assessment of such requests and prepare mitigation measures to minimize the risks to staff and delegates". The Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) team concluded that the proposed meeting is at low risk if the following precautionary measures aimed at mitigating the spread of COVID-19 are put in place:


- Access to the United Nations complex during the plenary meeting will be restricted;
- In addition to the listed entry requirements in the Annex, attendees confirm on entry to the UN complex that they have met any quarantine requirements of New York State regarding travel in the last 14 days from countries or US States considered high risk;
- To ensure the effectiveness of physical distancing in the General Assembly Hall, only one delegate per Member State and a delegate each from the Holy See, the State of Palestine and the European Union will be allowed in the Hall;
- Upon arrival at the United Nations Headquarters, one ticket will be issued by the Safety and Security Service per Member State and for the Holy See, the State of Palestine and the European Union;

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

- Access to the General Assembly Hall will require a regular delegate's pass and the ticket;
- The seating plan will be slightly amended to ensure physical distancing and the affected Member States will be reminded accordingly;
- The proceedings of the meetings will be webcast live and on-demand on UN Web TV, allowing representatives of intergovernmental organizations and other entities having received a standing invitation to participate as observers to do so through webcast;
- All statements will be made by delegations from their national seats;
- Furthermore, the Secretariat will actively manage the exit by calling each row for departure in a staggered manner;
- Information regarding additional measures is provided in the Annex.

As announced in the *Journal of the United Nations*, the General Assembly will consider the report of the General Committee, contained in document A/75/250 under agenda item 7 entitled "Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items: reports of the General Committee".

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



Volkan BOZKIR



# GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR MITIGATION OF COVID-19 EXPOSURE DURING MEETINGS IN THE UNHQ COMPLEX

UPDATED 27 AUGUST 2020

This guidance is the agreed minimum standard required to be met for meetings and is in accordance with current New York City and State requirements regarding public gatherings, and the Phase Two restrictions for activity in the United Nations Headquarters (UNHQ) complex as detailed in the Crisis Operations Group Reintegration Plan.

Note that whilst not required under the Organization's privileges and immunities, New York State guidelines do not currently support large scale indoor gatherings such as this meeting.

## ATTENDANCE AND ENTRY

Attendance in the meeting room is restricted to delegates and those staff members with a direct role. Increasing numbers introduce complexity and increase the likelihood of interactions and exposure.

By swiping their United Nations issued ID card on entry, all attendees and support staff declare as a condition of their entry that they:

- Have completed quarantine if in the last 14 days they have arrived from a country or US State that is considered elevated risk<sup>1 2</sup>.
- Have not been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days;
- Have not had symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the last 14 days; and
- Have not had close contact with someone with COVID-19 or symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

## PROTECTIVE MEASURES

**Face coverings:** All meeting attendees are required to wear a face covering at all times whilst in public spaces, and in the meeting room except when directly addressing the meeting. All UN staff will wear face coverings at all times. Disposable face masks will be made available if needed. All delegates and staff will be offered a disposable surgical face mask if needed as part of meeting registration or entry.

**Gloves:** Gloves and other protective equipment are not required for most attendees. Hand-sanitizing solution will be available on entry to the meeting room. All surfaces will be deep cleaned prior to the meeting commencing.

**Physical distancing:** All attendees are to refrain from direct contact including handshakes and other physical contact during greetings in recognition of the physical distancing requirements. All attendees should remain conscious of COVID-19 hand sanitizing and contact precautions. To support contact precautions, no food or drink / glassware will be provided in meeting rooms.

<sup>1</sup> <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

<sup>2</sup> <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-travel-advisory>

## **MOVEMENTS**

All movement and if necessary queuing requires 2 meter physical distancing, and attendees are requested to minimize activity until seated in the meeting room. Wherever practicable, waiting and queues should be outside rather than indoors.

## **INTERPRETATION SERVICES**

Simultaneous interpretation will take place using multiple booths as determined by DGACM staff.

There will be a single interpreter at a time in each interpretation booth, and each interpreter will occupy their own dedicated workspace. Doors are to remain open.

In accordance with DGACM requirements interpretation service shifts will be limited to 3 hours..

## **MEDICAL SUPPORT AND CONTACT TRACING**

DGACM staff will record the participants and support staff present at each meeting and forward this to the DHMOSH Occupational Safety and Health team as a record in support of contact tracing.

Emergency medical support is available to any attendee from security staff and from medical staff located in the Secretariat building.

Any attendee who begins to feel unwell (non-emergency) should immediately leave the UN complex and return to their accommodation and to seek medical care,

Should any attendee become unwell with or be diagnosed with COVID-19 during or within 14 days of the meeting, they are strongly encouraged to contact DHMOSH medical staff through the confidential address [osh@un.org](mailto:osh@un.org). Contact tracing will take place and testing may be offered to those considered contacts.



## OPENING AND CLOSING SAFETY BRIEFS FOR MEETINGS

UPDATED 27 AUGUST 2020

The following information should be provided to all meeting attendees both in written form before and after a meeting, and as part of the opening and closing statements by the Chair. If appropriate the text can be paraphrased to suit the audience or the as the Chair determines.

### OPENING BRIEF

Because of the health impact of the coronavirus pandemic, any large group meeting in an enclosed space such as this represents a risk to both delegates and the Secretariat staff supporting the meeting. Your efforts to comply with the new requirements for a safe meeting are part of a social contract that is critical not only to the safe conduct of this meeting, but to the meetings which may follow.

I would be grateful if you could:

- Maintain physical distancing of at least six feet / two meters at all times. This includes refraining from physical contact such as handshakes when greeting your colleagues;
- Wear your face covering or mask at all times, although you may remove it if you wish when addressing the meeting;
- Use the hand sanitizer provided at stations throughout the room; and
- Most importantly, do not attend or stay in the meeting if you become unwell with fever or other features of COVID-19. This perhaps represents the highest risk to our safety.

**(If delegate seating is offset to allow 197 attendees)**

- Please ensure you keep your seat in its current position which has been set to meet the physical distancing requirements and ensure the safety of those seated across the aisle from you.
- Delegates may speak from where they are, or may reposition their seat directly behind their nameplate when addressing the meeting. Please move back to your original position as soon as you have finished speaking.

### CLOSING BRIEF

Part of the occupational safety and health plan for this meeting includes the possibility of follow-up in the unfortunate, and hopefully unlikely event of a case of COVID-19.

- If any delegate develops features of COVID-19 or has a positive COVID-19 test in the next 14 days, the United Nations Medical Director strongly encourages you to contact the medical service using the medical-in-confidence email address [osh@un.org](mailto:osh@un.org)
- The UN clinic will undertake normal contact tracing process which is entirely confidential, and no contact will be told who the case was. Testing can also be arranged through UN clinic if required.

Prepared by the DOS/DHMOSH Occupational Safety and Health Team  
For any questions about the contents of this document contact [OSH@un.org](mailto:OSH@un.org)