



14 September 2021

Excellency,

As we embark on the 76th session of the General Assembly today, we remain in the midst of a global pandemic that continues to wreak devastation on peoples' lives and livelihoods around the world. While New York City, home to the United Nations Headquarters and the General Assembly, has benefitted greatly from the ready availability of vaccines, the highly contagious COVID-19 delta variant remains a risk in the City, particularly to those not vaccinated.

In the days before formally taking office, I have received the attached two letters from the City of New York.

The first letter, from the Commissioner for International Affairs of the City of New York, Ms Penny Abeywardena, conveys the City's intention to provide vaccination and testing resources for the attendees of the General Assembly High-Level Week starting from 20 September 2021. Further details will be provided shortly.

The second letter, from Ms. Abeywardena and the Commissioner of Health and Mental Hygiene, Dr. Dave Chokshi, informs that, under New York City regulations, proof of vaccination is required for certain indoor activities, including at United Nations Headquarters. Accordingly, proof of vaccination would be required to gain entry to the General Assembly Hall.

I strongly support this measure as an important step in our return to a fully-functional General Assembly – a measure which should allow a further increase in in-person meetings and negotiations this session. I stand ready to work with the Secretary-General to implement the proof of vaccination requirement as soon as possible.

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

Abdulla Shahid

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



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Thursday, September 9th 2021

The Honorable Abdulla Shahid
President-elect of the Seventy-Sixth Session of the General Assembly
United Nations
New York, NY

Excellency:

On behalf of New York City, we would be pleased to offer vaccination and testing resources for the attendees of the UN General Assembly, for the week of September 20, 2021. We look forward to working with your team to determine the details and logistics for the deployment of these resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Abeywardena", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Penny Abeywardena
Commissioner for International Affairs
City of New York



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Thursday, September 9, 2021

The Honorable Abdulla Shahid
President-elect of the Seventy-Sixth Session of the General Assembly
United Nations
New York, NY

Excellency:

Spread of the highly contagious COVID-19 delta variant remains a major concern in New York City (NYC) and, over the last two months, [new cases have increased significantly](#). As of mid-August, the case rate was more than 7 times greater than it was at the beginning of July, and hospitalizations had nearly doubled.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19, New York City has instituted a vaccination requirement for certain indoor activities. Pursuant to local law, proof of vaccination is required for anyone engaging in indoor dining, indoor fitness, and indoor entertainment activities throughout New York City. Indoor entertainment also includes "convention centers," and the UN General Assembly Hall qualifies as a convention center.

Under this City requirement, all persons entering the UN premises for the purpose of entering the General Assembly Hall would be required to show proof of vaccination in order to gain entry to the Hall. They must also show proof of vaccination prior to dining, drinking, or exercising indoors on the UN campus, and in order to partake in all of New York City's wonderful entertainment, dining, and fitness activities.

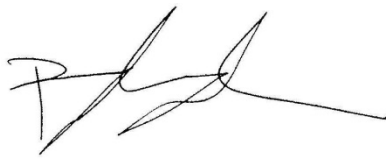
As a reminder, per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) requirements, all visitors must be tested prior to entry into the United States. See more about the CDC [requirement here](#). The CDC has further recommended that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, wear a mask indoors in localities with substantial or high transmission. New York City currently falls into this category and large indoor gatherings of potentially unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals pose a serious risk for COVID-19 transmission.

Additionally, New York State requires people to wear masks indoors on public transit, in healthcare and congregate settings, and in schools, and for individuals who are not fully


vaccinated in all public spaces outside the home. Furthermore, New York City strongly encourages universal mask use indoors regardless of vaccination status.

Vaccines and testing are readily available in New York City and resources are available for any attendee who is interested in getting tested or receiving a vaccine while they are attending the General Assembly meeting. The City is prepared to deploy resources to the UN campus, and attendees can also find a vaccine distribution site, please visit vaccinefinder.nyc.gov or call 877-VAX-4NYC (877-829-4692).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Abeywardena', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Penny Abeywardena
Commissioner
International Affairs

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Chokshi', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dave A. Chokshi, MD, MSc
Commissioner
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Cc: His Excellency, Mr. António.Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations