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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

11 March 2022

Dear Mr. President,

I write to provide you with an update regarding the COVID-19-related mitigation measures at United Nations Headquarters and steps being taken by the Secretariat towards the next phase of our transition to the Next Normal.

In New York City the metrics around the COVID-19 pandemic have drastically changed with sharply downward pointing trends for cases, hospitalizations and transmission rates after the peak in early January. At present, the City of New York reports around 600 new cases and 30 hospitalizations per day. These numbers are comparable to all-time lows of the summer of 2020 and 2021.

Given the improvements and, in accordance with local guidance, a decision was made to make mask use voluntary for United Nations personnel from Monday, 14 March 2022. By swiping their United Nations-issued ID, all persons entering the United Nations Headquarter premises confirm they have not had symptoms consistent with COVID-19 in the last 5 days or a positive COVID-19 test result in the last 5 days. Furthermore, the Secretariat will be able to enter the "Next Normal" phase in New York on Monday, 4 April 2022.

The Secretariat, effective Monday, 28 March 2022, will be able to further increase the availability of conference rooms with interpretation capacity as listed in the annex. This will allow for the technical and physical work to be done after the conclusion of the Commission on the Status of Women to prevent any disruption to the meetings starting on Monday, 14 March 2022.

In January, the Secretariat commenced with the renewal of annual passes for 2022 for representatives of Civil Society Organizations with consultative status with ECOSOC. Accredited representatives now will be able to access the premises from 14 March 2022.

His Excellency Mr. Abdulla Shahid President of the General Assembly New York Our focus for now will be on increasing our conference room capacity and support to intergovernmental meetings. Decisions regarding the opening of the buildings to visitors, the general public, including for United Nations Guided Tours, and non-resident correspondents, and the holding of side events/receptions will be taken in April once we are able to assess the impact of an increased footprint in the premises.

In accordance with local guidance, proof of vaccination for indoor dinning, eating, and drinking will not be required from Monday, 14 March 2022. The current hours for on-site dining will remain the same. The North Delegates lounge is currently open although the bar will remain closed until it is economically feasible to reopen. The Delegate's dining lounge is also under review and will reopen when economically feasible.

The adjustments outlined in the annex are without prejudice to any subsequent changes that may be necessitated as the Secretariat continues to ensure that the work of the Organization is conducted as safely and effectively as possible.

I wish to assure you of our continued firm commitment to supporting the work of the General Assembly and all intergovernmental meetings taking place at United Nations Headquarters.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.

E. Courtenay Rattray Chef de Cabinet