



**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

12 June 2020

Dear New York-based Colleagues,

We have been successfully operating via telecommuting and other arrangements for the past three months. I thank you once again for your flexibility and commitment during these challenging times and wish to assure you that your health and safety continue to be my top priority.

After consulting with senior management and our medical services regarding the COVID-19 situation, I have decided to extend the current telecommuting arrangements at the Headquarters complex through 31 July 2020. We will continue to review these arrangements and will provide advance notice should there be any easing or further extension of these measures.

In the meantime, we are actively preparing the buildings for a phased return. Our plan consists of four phases. During the current phase (Phase Zero), our aim is to keep our footprint at the Headquarters complex below 200 people – staff and delegates. The Department of Operational Support is doing a deep cleaning of the premises, placing signage around the buildings to guide staff on physical distancing, and making other arrangements to lower the exposure risk for returning personnel and delegates, which we envisage would start in Phase Two when we will gradually move from 10 to 40 per cent occupancy.

Although we have not yet set a date for when we will move into Phase One, I would like to provide some information about what you can expect. During Phase One, only those functions that need to be performed on site will be conducted on site. The vast majority of staff will continue to telecommute, and there must be a compelling reason for personnel to be present in the buildings. In this phase, no more than 400 people should be at the Headquarters complex on any given day, and physical distancing will be strictly enforced for common spaces.

The Crisis Operations Group is currently conducting an on-site requirement assessment in order to determine which functions will be performed on site during Phase One. Managers will be in touch with all personnel who will come to the buildings during this period to coordinate the details. Detailed guidelines for those who will be asked to return to the workplace will be shared in the coming weeks, and further town hall meetings will be organized to respond to your questions and concerns. Information on the various phases is available on iSeek and at the COVID-19 website. Please rest assured that we will communicate with you well in advance of moving into Phase One, and later into Phase Two.

All United Nations Staff Members  
New York

Updates will continue to be shared at [www.un.org/coronavirus](http://www.un.org/coronavirus). The COVID-19 helpline (212 963 9999) remains in place, and the Department of Operational Support and Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance stand ready to assist as needed.

I again urge anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, test results or any health-related questions to contact the United Nations Division for Healthcare Management and Occupational Safety and Health using the confidential self-reporting portal ([medical.un.org](http://medical.un.org)) or via [osh@un.org](mailto:osh@un.org). All such approaches will be handled with confidentiality and privacy.

Thank you for your outstanding efforts during these challenging times.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'António Guterres', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned above a long, thin horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right side.

António Guterres