



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9 April 2020

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to transmit herewith, a document outlining the step-by-step process for the consideration of draft decisions/resolutions, in accordance with General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020, entitled, “*Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic*”.

To ensure ease of access, all documents on the work of the General Assembly during this extraordinary time, can be found under the “COVID-19” tab on my website (<https://www.un.org/pga/74/covid-19/>).

Meanwhile, I am pleased that the General Assembly has continued its important work via novel means in order to ensure business continuity and mitigate the spread of COVID-19. My Office will continue to, regularly, update Member States via webinars on a weekly basis.

I avail 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, consisting of a stylized, cursive script.

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

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



## **UPDATED**

### **Step-by-Step process for consideration of draft decisions/resolutions in accordance with General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 entitled “Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic”**

When the President of the General Assembly intends to circulate a draft decision/resolution to the General Assembly via silence procedure in accordance with General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 entitled “Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic”, the following steps will be followed:

1. The President of the General Assembly will consult the General Committee.
2. The President of the General Assembly will, by a letter, circulate the draft decision/resolution to all Member States under a silence procedure of at least 72 hours.
  - The letter will indicate the specific time by which any objections should be raised;
  - The letter will attach the following:
    - The English text of the draft decision/resolution. The draft decision/resolution will be made available at the same time the letter is sent on Official Document System (<https://documents.un.org/prod/ods.nsf/home.xsp>) in all official languages, unless, in accordance with practice, extraordinary circumstances the Assembly to take action on the basis of the English unedited text only;

- Any requisite procedural decision (such as the reopening of an item that was previously closed or reallocation of the item to the plenary) also to be put under the silence procedure with the same deadline;
  - Any information available from the Secretariat on programme budgetary implications. If there is an oral statement on programme budgetary implications, it will be posted by DGACM on e-deleGATE (General Assembly plenary announcements) and Member States will also be notified by email from [gaab@un.org](mailto:gaab@un.org);
  - Outline the procedure for explanations of position in annex (see below).
3. If there are no objections within the specified time period, the President of the General Assembly will circulate a letter confirming adoption.

As per usual practice, the complete list of co-sponsors, including all additional co-sponsors, will be issued as an addendum to the L document (A/74/L.XX/Add.1) soon after the adoption.

4. If adopted, Member States wishing to make an explanation of position (except co-sponsors who are not allowed to make an explanation under rule 88 of the rules of procedure) may do so in any of the following ways, without prejudice to the delegations' rights under the rules of procedure to explain their position at the first plenary meeting to be held in order for the General Assembly to take note of the decision after the cessation of the precautionary measures as soon as the circumstance allow:

Option 1: electronic versions of the statements in explanation of position received within two weeks of the end of the silence procedure will be posted on the [e-delegate](#) portal, under Plenary announcements. Please indicate the title of the draft decision/resolution in the subject line of the e-mail to be sent to Ms. Ludette Quiogue at [quiogue@un.org](mailto:quiogue@un.org) in the General Assembly Affairs Branch.

Option 2: Member States can address their communication to the President of the General Assembly (to be sent to [opga@un.org](mailto:opga@un.org)). If received prior or within the hour following the end of the silence procedure, it will then be circulated in a subsequent letter from the President to all Member States. If received afterwards, it will be posted on the [e-delegate](#) portal. Please clearly indicate the title of the draft decision/resolution in the subject line of the communication.

Option 3: Member States can also address a communication to the Secretary-General requesting the issuance of their communication.

- Such communications should be addressed to the Secretary-General and signed by the permanent representative or chargé d'affaires, a.i., of the permanent mission to the United Nations.
  - The communications should indicate the session of the General Assembly, and the number and title of the agenda item under which circulation is requested, using the agenda of current session of the Assembly.
  - A scanned copy of the original signed communications (PDF version) as well as their Microsoft Word versions should be sent together to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (sgcentral@un.org) with a copy to gaab@un.org and dms@un.org to facilitate processing. If versions in any other United Nations official languages are available, they should be included electronically with a clear indication of the original language and/or which language versions are to be used for reference only.
5. Member States wishing to make an objection may do so via a letter or Note Verbale addressed to the President of the General Assembly. Such correspondence should be sent via email to [opga@un.org](mailto:opga@un.org). Please clearly indicate the title of the draft decision/resolution in the subject line of the communication.
6. If there are objections, the President of the General Assembly will circulate a letter informing that the silence has been broken.

The President of the General Assembly may choose to refer the draft decision/resolution and the objections to the sponsors, the co-facilitators of the General Assembly mandated processes for the 74<sup>th</sup> session, the Chair of the originating Committee, his Office, or a facilitator designated by him, to undertake further consultations.

If there is a revised draft, that can be put to another round of silence procedure either (1) as Rev.1 to the L document or (2) in a form of an “oral revision” that describes the change from the original L document. The same procedure set out in paragraphs 2 to 5 above would be followed.

Please note that currently no vote is technically possible and foreseen for the adoption of draft decisions/resolutions in accordance with General Assembly decision 74/544 of 27 March 2020 entitled “Procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.”

7. At the first possible General Assembly meeting in the General Assembly Hall, the Assembly will take note of the decisions/resolutions adopted under the silence procedure. The Assembly will also be informed of additional co-sponsors communicated to the Secretariat before the deadline for the silence procedure and will hear the oral statement on programme budgetary implications, if any. At that meeting, delegations will also have the opportunity to deliver their statements in explanation of position, in accordance with the rules of procedure.

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