

**Explanation of Position on A/74/L.65 entitled “Extension of the procedure for taking decisions of the General Assembly during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”**

**on behalf of Qatar, Singapore, Switzerland and Liechtenstein**

Our countries appreciate the efforts of the President of the General Assembly to ensure that the General Assembly can take decisions during this COVID-19 pandemic. We are committed to a strong, engaged and fully functional General Assembly in these times of unprecedented challenges for the United Nations.

The procedure set out in General Assembly decision 74/544 has allowed the General Assembly to adopt a number of decisions since its adoption on 27 March 2020. Its application was limited in time until the end of May in order to ensure a timely review, in light of developments regarding the pandemic and also with a view to making progress towards a fully functional General Assembly.

In this regard our countries would like to register the following understanding:

The rules of procedure of the General Assembly continue to remain valid and in place. We welcome the commitment by the President of the General Assembly to finding arrangements allowing for their full application. Giving the General Assembly the necessary tools to fully and efficiently discharge its important mandate is indispensable to allow it to be fully operational – the current state of affairs is therefore not acceptable to our countries for a prolonged period of time. It is thus with a sense of urgency that we support the facilitation process led by H.E. Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations. An early and successful conclusion of that process will provide a necessary complement to the decision contained in A/74/L.65 that will allow future discussions on the extension of transitional measures.

The decision contained in A/74/L.65 applies to decisions that are put forward by the President of the General Assembly. It does not apply to draft resolutions put forward by member States, unless the proposing State or States so request. The decision contained in A/74/L.65 does therefore not, in any way or form, infringe of the sovereign right of member States to propose resolutions directly to the General Assembly, to seek their consideration in an appropriate and timely manner and to call for a vote on any draft resolution before the General Assembly.

It is also our understanding that the decision contained in A/74/L.65 can be applied to elections to subsidiary organs of the General Assembly and to the election of the President and Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly in the case of a clean slate and in the absence of a request for a secret ballot.

Our countries kindly request that this understanding be duly reflected in the records of the adoption of the draft decision. We remain committed to working closely with the President of the General Assembly and his Facilitators in these difficult times for the benefit of the General Assembly and its central role on the international stage during this crisis.

New York, 15 May 2020

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