



Security Council

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Letter dated 27 March 2020 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Permanent Representatives of the members of the Security Council

I would like to thank all of you for your support in the present challenging circumstances. I appreciate all your efforts aimed at enhancing the unity of the Security Council and ensuring the continuity of our important work in the current extraordinary circumstances caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

In order to proceed with the adoption of resolutions, China, in its capacity as President of the Council for the month of March 2020, on the basis of agreement among Council members, is taking the initiative to set forth the following procedure.

Following a request from a Security Council member or members presenting a draft resolution in blue, the President will circulate a letter to members of the Council announcing that the draft resolution, to be included in the letter as an annex, will be put to a vote, and requesting Council members to provide their votes in writing within a non-extendable period of 24 hours. There will be an announcement in the Council's programme of work that the process is under way. The draft resolution will be translated into the six official languages of the United Nations before the end of the 24-hour period.

Within the 24-hour period, every delegation will send the Director of the Security Council Affairs Division a letter from its permanent representative or chargé d'affaires, submitted electronically to the Division, indicating its vote (in favour, against or abstention) on the draft resolution and, if applicable, an explanation of vote. The Division will acknowledge receipt, will keep votes confidential during that period and will communicate the result to the President of the Security Council upon the expiry of the 24-hour voting period. The Council member or members presenting the resolution will not be able to withdraw or amend the resolution once the voting period has begun. Any delegation that fails to respond within the 24-hour voting period will be considered to have been absent from the vote.

Within 12 hours of the conclusion of the voting period, the President will convene a videoconference of the Security Council to announce the outcome of the vote.

Within three hours of the conclusion of the voting period, the President will circulate a letter, listing every delegation's vote and the outcome of the vote, to all Security Council members, the Member States concerned and the Security Council Affairs Division. If the draft resolution is adopted, the Division will, after receiving the letter from the President, circulate that resolution, with a date and number, to all Council members and the Member States concerned. There will be a six-hour period for members to make an explanation of vote in written form, if they so wish, upon



receiving the President's letter on the voting outcome. The Member States concerned will also be able to make a written statement, with the agreement of the Council, in line with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure. The voting result and all the letters will be sent to the Division for its records and published on the Council website.

Resolutions adopted through the above written procedure will have the same legal status as those voted on in the Security Council Chamber.

In addition to the above procedure, during the same period, the President of the Security Council will announce to the public and Member States, 24 hours in advance, the intention to schedule videoconferences of members of the Council.

The President of the Security Council may invite Member States that are not members of the Council to participate in a videoconference of members of the Council, when the interests of that Member are specially affected and there are no objections from any Council member. This will not apply to videoconferences of the members of the Council that are announced in advance as closed videoconferences.

To ensure the transparency of those videoconferences, the President of the Security Council will, within 48 hours, circulate as a document of the Council a compilation document containing the interventions of the briefers and of all those Council members who request the inclusion of their statements in the document. To that end, the members will send their statements to the presidency in a timely manner. This will not apply to videoconferences of members of the Council that are announced in advance as closed videoconferences.

These temporary, extraordinary and provisional measures will be in place for the duration of the restrictions on movement in New York owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, to enable the Council to discharge its mandate, and will not be considered as a precedent in the future. The implementation of these measures will be assessed at the end of April, and they may be renewed, adjusted or discontinued, subject to agreement among all members.

(Signed) **Zhang Jun**
President of the Security Council
