

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES

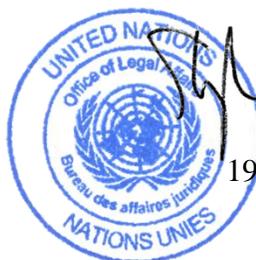
POSTAL ADDRESS-ADRESSE POSTALE: UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. 10017
TELEPHONE NO: (212)-963-1234; FAX NO. (212)-963-4879

REFERENCE: 20200819UnNvStatesParties

The Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations presents its compliments to all Permanent Missions of Member States to the United Nations, Permanent Observer Missions to the United Nations and States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and has the honour to refer to the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The Office of Legal Affairs is pleased to transmit attached herewith a letter dated 18 August 2020 from the President of the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties addressed to all Permanent Representatives of Member States to the United Nations, Permanent Observers of non-Member States to the United Nations and Representatives of other States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, regarding agenda item 7, entitled "Organization of work".

The Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Permanent Missions of Member States to the United Nations, Permanent Observer Missions to the United Nations and States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea the assurances of its highest consideration.

 
19 August 2020

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES

POSTAL ADDRESS-ADRESSE POSTALE: UNITED NATIONS, N.Y. 10017
TELEPHONE NO: (212)-963-1234; FAX NO. (212)-963-4879

REFERENCE: 20200819UnNvÉtatsParties

Le Bureau des affaires juridiques de l'Organisation des Nations Unies présente ses compliments à toutes les missions permanentes des États Membres auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies, aux missions permanentes d'observation auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies et aux États parties à la Convention des Nations Unies sur le droit de la mer, et a l'honneur de se référer à la trentième Réunion des États parties à la Convention.

Le Bureau des affaires juridiques a le plaisir de transmettre ci-joint une lettre datée du 18 août 2020, qui est adressée aux représentants permanents des États Membres auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies, aux observateurs permanents d'États non-membres auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies et aux représentants d'autres États parties à la Convention des Nations Unies sur le droit de la mer, au sujet du point 7 de l'ordre du jour, intitulé «Organisation des travaux».

Le Bureau des affaires juridiques de l'Organisation des Nations Unies saisit cette occasion pour renouveler à toutes les missions permanentes des États Membres auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies, aux missions permanentes d'observation auprès de l'Organisation des Nations Unies et aux États parties à la Convention des Nations Unies sur le droit de la mer les assurances de sa très haute considération.

 *Shah Malik*
Le 19 août 2020



PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
UNITED NATIONS | NEW YORK

18 August 2020

Excellencies,

I wish to refer to my letters dated 30 July, 5 August, 11 August and 14 August 2020 concerning the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Further to my letter dated 14 August 2020, informing States Parties of the adoption of the agenda as decision 30/3 (to be issued as SPLOS/30/1), I would like to address the organization of work of the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties as per agenda item 7, entitled “Organization of work”.

In my assessment, agenda item 13, entitled “Election of seven members of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea”, is the most time-sensitive item on the agenda of the Meeting. Accordingly, the election is a matter that must be dealt with urgently.

For this reason, and based on consultations with members of the Bureau and the Secretariat, it is my intention to convene an in-person plenary meeting of the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties in order to consider agenda item 13 and hold the aforementioned election during that in-person meeting.

I have been informed that there is very limited availability of meeting room facilities and support services over the next few weeks, in view of other competing demands, notably for the High-Level Week and other essential meetings of the General Assembly. Taking into account the availability of facilities and services and the need to proceed urgently, I propose that the in-person meeting be held on **Monday, 24 August 2020 at 10.00 am** in the General Assembly Hall at the United Nations Headquarters primarily for the purpose of holding the above-mentioned election.

Due to the safety and health risks posed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, it would be important that the number of individuals in the General Assembly Hall be kept to the minimum necessary. Thus, taking into account the fact that the proposed meeting on 24 August 2020 is being held primarily to conduct the above-mentioned election, only State Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (one representative per State Party) will be allowed entry into the General Assembly Hall.

I wish to point to the letter dated 29 July 2020 from the United Nations Secretary-General regarding the phased return to the United Nations Headquarters premises in New York. While the United Nations will transition to Phase 2 on 24 August 2020, the Secretary-General has underlined that virtual meetings will remain the recommended and preferred option and that it might be possible to organize only a limited number of meetings in a relatively safe manner, with full social distancing and the necessary risk assessment and mitigation measures to minimize the risks to staff and delegates.

Accordingly, I will consult further with the Secretariat on the necessary mitigation measures and transmit a follow-up letter containing guidelines that all States Parties will need to adhere to during the in-person meeting in order to mitigate the risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Following the circulation of this letter, a virtual briefing addressing these guidelines will be held. The Secretariat will inform delegations about the date, time and modalities for this briefing, which is tentatively scheduled for Friday, 21 August 2020.

Following the opening of the plenary meeting of the thirtieth Meeting in the morning of Monday, 24 August 2020, the Meeting would first take note of the decisions adopted by the silence procedure (30/1: “Procedure for taking decisions of the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”; 30/2: “Election of the President”; 30/3: “Adoption of the agenda”; 30/4: “Election of Vice-Presidents”; and 30/5: “Appointment of the Credentials Committee”). Thereafter, the Meeting would address, in the following order: agenda item 7, entitled “Organization of work”; agenda item 12, entitled “Report of the Credentials Committee”; and agenda item 13, entitled “Election of seven members of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea”.

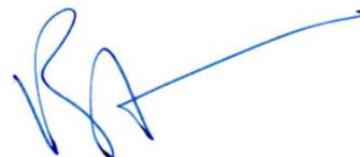
Bearing in mind the limited availability of meeting room facilities, the need to maintain vigilance in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the necessity to minimize the risks arising from in-person meetings, I propose to adjourn the meeting after having completed consideration of agenda item 13. In this regard, the meeting may continue on 25 and 26 August, as necessary, to complete the consideration of this agenda item. The consideration of the remaining items on the agenda of the Meeting will be taken up at a later stage. To that end, I will conduct consultations with the Bureau and delegations and will revert to States Parties with the proposed organization of work for the remaining items on the agenda in due course. In this connection, I wish to highlight, in particular, that agenda item 11(c), entitled “Draft budget proposals of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea for the budget period 2021-2022”, will have to be completed prior to the end of the year.

As the practice of the Meeting of States Parties has been that general statements are delivered under agenda item 14, entitled “Reports of the Secretary-General under article 319 for the information of States parties on issues of a general nature, relevant to States parties, which have arisen with respect to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea”, I propose that general statements be reserved for a later stage, to be heard at a subsequent meeting. Accordingly, and taking into account the limited time available for the election process to be completed, general statements will not be made on 24 August 2020.

I seek the kind understanding of all States Parties and wish to express my hope that the proposed organization of work, which will be taken up under agenda item 7 in the morning of 24 August 2020, is acceptable to all States Parties as outlined above.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to draw attention to the fact that the Rules of Procedure for Meetings of States Parties require delegations to submit credentials. Further, in the practice of the Meeting of States Parties, ballots are distributed only to delegations whose credentials have been approved by the Meeting of States Parties, based on a recommendation by the Credentials Committee. For these reasons, I would like to urge all States Parties who have yet to submit their credentials to do so as soon as possible. In this regard I draw the attention of delegations to the fact that the meeting of the Credentials Committee is tentatively scheduled for 20 August 2020 and to notification [MSP.N.2020.LOS.Add.2](#) circulated by the Secretariat on 6 July 2020, containing all relevant information concerning the credentials for the thirtieth Meeting. The notification is available online at https://www.un.org/Depts/los/meeting_states_parties/thirtiethmeetingstatesparties.htm.

Please accept, Excellencies, the assurances of my highest consideration.



H.E. Burhan Gafoor

President of the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

All Permanent Representatives of Member States to the United Nations, Permanent Observers of non-Member States to the United Nations, and Representatives of other States Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea