



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

17 April 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I wish to express my appreciation for the flexibility and resourcefulness you have demonstrated during the COVID-19 pandemic and for these past five weeks of telecommuting. Thanks to your dedication, the United Nations has been able to continue its vital work around the world.

Yesterday, Governor Andrew Cuomo announced that all “New York State on PAUSE” restrictions and closures will be extended through 15 May 2020. As a result, in consultation with senior management and our medical services, and following a conservative and pragmatic approach, I have decided that the current telecommuting arrangements at United Nations Headquarters shall be extended through 31 May 2020. We will continue to review such arrangements, as subsequent extensions may be necessary, and will provide you with advance notice.

The Senior Emergency Policy Team, along with the Crisis Operations Group, are also working on measures for an eventual phased, gradual and flexible return to work in the building whenever it is considered safe for us to do so. Any decision will be guided by medical advice, continuous risk assessments, local conditions, including school closures, and criticality of functions for our business continuity.

I wish to assure you that we will exercise maximum flexibility for staff with children, vulnerable dependents and underlying health conditions. I am also mindful that telecommuting arrangements are working well and that some functions could be performed remotely for longer periods by staff who do not fall into the aforementioned categories. At the appropriate time, senior managers will engage with you in the planning for our eventual return to the premises. Of course, senior managers and I will also be in regular contact with you as developments unfold.

Updates will continue to be shared at www.un.org/coronavirus. The COVID-19 helpline remains in place to answer your questions (1 212 963 9999), and the Departments of Operational Support and of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance stand ready to assist as needed.

All United Nations Staff Members

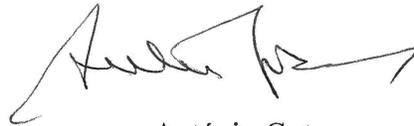
I again urge anyone with symptoms or health-related questions to contact the United Nations Medical Service. Rest assured that all such approaches will be handled with confidentiality and privacy. Your health and well-being remain at the forefront of my mind.

The crisis is upending lives and economies across the world and is exacting a horrific toll here in New York. I am proud of the contributions the United Nations is making to the global response, and of the solidarity we are showing with our host city at this stressful time.

Thank you again for your commitment and hard work.

Yours sincerely,

with my warmest personal regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'António Guterres', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

António Guterres