



General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

61st plenary meeting
Wednesday, 11 March 2020, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Muhammad-Bande (Nigeria)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Announcement of precautionary measures against coronavirus outbreak

The President: As those present are aware, the World Health Organization has declared the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak a public health emergency of international concern. While the emphasis of that decision is on global measures to control the outbreak, individuals can contribute by following the advice to think globally but act locally. I urge all participants to continue to follow the guidance provided by the Secretariat, including to strictly not attend meetings if one is unwell or has a fever, cough or respiratory symptoms, to contact the Medical Service Division here at Headquarters by telephone if one is unwell and has been to an at-risk location for coronavirus in the last 14 days, and to undertake regular preventive measures, such as cough etiquette and regular hand washing. Those measures are for our safety and safeguard the well-being of us all.

Agenda item 74 (continued)

Oceans and the law of the sea

(a) Oceans and the law of the sea

Draft decision (A/74/L.41)

The President: Members will recall that through my letter dated 9 March 2020, I circulated a letter from the President of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction. In that letter, the President informed the Assembly that, in light of the situation concerning the coronavirus disease, she held an informal meeting with delegations on 9 March to consider the postponement of the fourth session of the Conference, and it was agreed that the fourth session be postponed to the earliest possible available date to be decided by the Assembly. In that regard, the Assembly has before it a draft decision issued as document A/74/L.41.

The Assembly will now take action on draft decision A/74/L.41, entitled “Intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Ms. De Miranda (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I would like to make the following statement concerning the draft decision A/74/L.41.

Under the terms of the draft decision, the General Assembly would decide to postpone the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity

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of areas beyond national jurisdiction to the earliest possible available date to be decided by the Assembly.

While it is not clear under the current fluid situation what the new dates of the session will be, new dates would have to be determined in consultation with the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, taking into account the calendar of conferences and meetings and resources available to service the meetings. The adoption of draft decision A/74/L.41 would not entail any programme budget implications, based on the assumption that the fourth session of the Conference will be held at some time in 2020. However, should the Conference to be held after

2020, programme budget implications would need to be reassessed.

The President: May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft decision A/74/L.41?

Draft decision A/74/L.41 was adopted (decision 74/543).

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 74 and its sub-item (a).

The meeting rose at 10.20 a.m.