



Meeting of States Parties

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Thirtieth Meeting

New York

Agenda item 10 (a)

**Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf:
information reported by the Chair of the Commission**

Letter dated 13 April 2020 from the Chair of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf addressed to the President of the thirtieth Meeting of States Parties

Addendum

Fifty-third, fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf

Further to my letter dated 13 April 2020 addressed to the President of the thirtieth Meeting of States parties (SPLOS/30/10), I wish to inform States parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, in my capacity of the Chair of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf, that in the light of the situation resulting from the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Commission decided not to hold its fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions in 2020.

In respect of its session in 2021, the Commission decided, for planning purposes and based on the pattern of previous sessions, and subject to the approval by the General Assembly as well as to any future COVID-19 contingencies, that the fifty-third session would be held from 25 January to 12 March,¹ the fifty-fourth session would be held from 6 July to 20 August² and the fifty-fifth session would be held from 6 October to 23 November,³ with full conference services, including documentation, for the plenary parts of those sessions.

The decision not to hold the fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions in 2020 was adopted by the silence procedure following a thorough consideration and evaluation by members of the Commission of all relevant factors and following an exchange of correspondence with the delegations of States parties with submissions currently under active consideration. In particular, the Commission took into account the challenges presented by working by means other than in-person sessions at United Nations Headquarters, given the confidential nature of the data and information contained in the submissions and of related deliberations and given that not all

¹ With plenary parts from 1 to 5 February and from 1 to 5 March 2021.

² With plenary parts from 26 to 30 July and from 9 to 13 August 2021.

³ No plenary parts.



members of the Commission have adequate conditions for full participation in remote work, especially in terms of access to secure equipment and to adequate broadband Internet connection. The Commission took also into consideration concerns expressed by some delegations, which related, inter alia, to the need to ensure the integrity of the process of examination of submissions and the adherence to the rules of procedure and practice of the Commission, as well as the need to ensure a fair and equal treatment of all active submissions.

The Commission agreed that, during the intersessional period, members would continue to work individually and that consultations, including consultations with submitting States, would also be held, as appropriate, with a view to identifying potential solutions for consideration of submissions by means other than in-person meetings, should the COVID-19 pandemic continue to prevent such in-person meetings in 2021.

(Signed) Adnan Rashid Nasser **Al-Azri**
Chair of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf
