Resolution on “Immediate measures given recent developments with the COVID-19 pandemic in New York”

The 47th Staff Council,

Recalling its Resolution No. 47/06, adopted on 19 August 2021, its Resolution No. 47/10, adopted on 9 September 2021, and its Resolution No. 47/15, adopted on 14 December 2021;

Noting with great concern the recent exponential increase of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the City of New York, and the related increase in hospitalizations,¹ and that this situation is not likely to abate in the immediate future;

Noting with appreciation the 18 December 2021 email broadcast from the Chair of the New York Occupational Safety and Health Committee whereas “starting Monday December 20, 2021 until Sunday January 09, 2022 inclusively, existing HR guidance on flexible work arrangements will be suspended to allow all staff, where functions allow, to work remotely”; as well as the intent of the Administration to “monitor the COVID-19 situation in New York City” and to provide an “update before January 08, 2022”;

Emphasizing that the safety and health of all United Nations Secretariat personnel should and must remain a paramount consideration for the determination of any work-related arrangements by the Organization;

Acknowledging the dedication and sacrifice of staff performing essential on-site functions for nearly two years, and noting that limiting the presence on premises of staff who are able to work from home also reduces the risk of exposure for on-site staff;

The Staff Council hereby,

1. Requests the reinstatement of alternate work arrangements (AWA) with immediate effect, whereby all staff are requested to telework full-time, except for staff performing essential on-site functions at the New York duty station;

2. Recommends that such arrangements be re-evaluated by 31 January 2022 based on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in the City of New York;

3. Requests further that staff performing essential on-site functions be exceptionally granted, throughout the pandemic:

a. Additional uncertified sick days, up to 15 for the current cycle from April 2021 to March 2022;
b. Special leave with full pay in cases of isolation due to close contact with infected persons, or if children in care cannot attend school due to suspected exposure;
c. Preference in parking at the United Nations garage free of charge; and
d. Consideration for receipt of danger pay, retroactively from March 2020;

4. **Recommends** that additional measures proposed by the United Nations Staff Union in its resolution 47/15 be fully implemented by the Administration;

5. **Instructs** the Leadership to share this resolution with the members of the Occupational Safety and Health Committee at Headquarters, as well as with the Chef de Cabinet, the Under-Secretaries-Generals of the Department of Management Strategy, Policy and Compliance; the Department of Operational Support; the Department for Safety and Security, as well as the Assistant-Secretary-General of the Office of Human Resources and all heads of offices/departments represented in the Staff Council; and staff at large via Broadcast; and

6. **Further instructs** the Leadership to circulate this resolution via an email broadcast to all members of the United Nations Staff Union.

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