Resolution on “Additional 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; resolution No. 47/10, adopted on 9 September 2021; resolution No. 47/15, adopted on 14 December 2021; and resolution 47/16, adopted on 21 December 2021;

Noting with great concern the exponential increase since 1 December 2021 of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the City of New York, and related increase in hospitalizations and deaths;

Noting the recent decrease in new COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths in the past weeks in the City of New York while observing the continuing very high transmission rate of the disease and further noting that it is unknown when the situation will substantially improve;

Noting the 7 January 2022 broadcast from the Chair of the New York Occupational Safety and Health Committee whereas “staff members may exceptionally telecommute five days a week from the duty station unless their functions and exigencies of service require them to be working from the UNHQ premises” until Friday 28 January 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 the essential on-site staff, who have kept the United Nations open for business for nearly two years during the period of the pandemic, and noting that limiting the on-premises presence of staff who are able to work from home also reduces the risk of exposure for on-site staff;

The Staff Council hereby,

1. Reiterate its requests, outlined in its resolution 47/16, for the reinstatement of alternate work arrangements (AWA) with immediate effect, whereas 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 28 February 2022 based on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in the New York duty station, taking into account, inter

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2 Ibid.
alia, the transmission rate, data on hospitalizations and deaths, the availability of COVID-19 at-home diagnostic tests, delays in obtaining results of laboratory COVID-19 tests, as well as the number of staff members infected and in isolation due to contact with infected people;

3. Recommends further that the Administration obtain and distribute free of charge to staff members performing essential on-site functions, COVID-19 at-home diagnostic tests authorized by the United States Food and Drug Administration;

4. Recommends that additional measures proposed by the United Nations Staff Union in its Resolutions 47/15 and 47/16 be fully implemented by the Administration, including special measures for essential on-site staff, the vaccination mandate, wearing of masks and measures related to air quality;

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-General 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 e-mail broadcast to all members of the United Nations Staff Union.

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