

**Постоянный представитель
Российской Федерации
при Организации
Объединенных Наций**



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No. 3562 /n

Urgent

New York, “15” September 2021

Dear Mr. President,

We were very much surprised and disappointed upon the receipt of your letter dated 14 September 2021 in which you “strongly support” proof of vaccination as a requirement to gain entry to the General Assembly Hall as suggested by NYC authorities.

The Russian Federation attaches great importance to the need to observe safety measures during the COVID-19 pandemic. However,

H.E. Mr. Abdulla Shahid
President of the General Assembly
United Nations

cc: H.E. Mr. António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations

cc: All Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers
to the United Nations

New York

we strongly object that only people with a proof of vaccination should be admitted to the GA Hall. It is a clearly discriminatory measure and would be contrary to the Agreement between the United Nations and the United States regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations of 1947. Moreover, preventing delegates of independent nations to access GA Hall or other locations in UN Headquarters will be a clear violation of the UN Charter.

There is a number of other issues that need to be taken into consideration in this regard: rights of people who can not be vaccinated for medical reasons, status of those who have just recovered from the COVID-19 and have antibodies, rights of people who received vaccines that are not approved by CDC etc. We highlighted some of them in our letter of May 24, 2021 (the copy is attached).

Attachment

The headquarters district is under the control and authority of the United Nations. According to section 8 of the said Agreement “no federal, state or local law or regulation of the United States which is inconsistent with a regulation of the United Nations ... be applicable within the headquarters district.”. The General Assembly has not adopted any regulations that require UN delegates to present a proof of vaccination to attend the meeting at the GA Hall. In his letter dated 14 July 2021, the President of the GA communicated the results of his consultations with Members States, the Secretariat and Host Country regarding the practical arrangements for in-person participation for the High-level Week of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. He indicated, inter alia, that an honour system related to vaccination status is now in place and should also apply

to the High-level Week. We are not aware of any other arrangements discussed with Member States thereafter.

With all due respect, Mr. President, you have no authority to impose any kind of such measures on Member states without discussing this matter with them. We believe that no measures beyond reasonable precautions should be introduced that de-facto prohibit Member States to participate in a meeting in GA Hall. This would be a clear breach of our United Nations Charter rights and privileges.

In view of the sensitivity of this matter for each Member States, we request to convene an urgent meeting of the General Assembly on Thursday, 16 September in order to discuss the situation.

We would respectfully urge you, Mr. President, to consistently defend interests of Member-States in contacts with Host-Country authorities and not to yield to requirements that contradict the UN Charter. This is your duty and we expect a proactive and principled position of your Office that would allow us to hold the upcoming High-level Week as well as the remainder of the 76-th Session of the GA without any discrimination and infringement of the rights of plenipotential representatives of Member-States.

Please accept, Mr. President, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Vassily Nebenzia