

Australia remains committed to the timely and effective implementation of Resolution 73/333. We appreciate the intentions of the co-facilitators to consult with all member states, especially when recognising the challenges of international engagement in the times of COVID-19.

However, Australia has concerns similar to those expressed by Switzerland, New Zealand, the US and other colleagues on both the direction and practicality of the consultation process.

The key output of Resolution 73/333 is the preparation of a political declaration, with a scope clearly defined by the five objectives and thirteen recommendations in the annex of the Resolution. We believe this week's consultation process will benefit from clarity on exactly what discussions on the open-ended questions put forward by the pre-meeting note will contribute towards the implementation of the Resolution. In particular, we are concerned that the breadth of questions posed in this note risks revisiting discussions already concluded as part of the 2019 working group negotiations.

It's important that our next steps be anchored in progress and understandings already achieved to date, but it's not entirely clear that this is happening. For instance, in January this year, Member States and Stakeholders were invited to submit written inputs on the implementation of Resolution 73/333, which were then summarised by the Secretariat. However, the agenda for these consultations does not appear to build on this existing input or the Secretariat's own summary document in any definitive way.

We also wish to convey our concerns about the inclusiveness of the current consultation process. The same summary of written inputs from January found there was a broad expectation that this process should maximise opportunities for meaningful participation by all Member States, including those without representation in Nairobi.

However, this week's consultation is taking place entirely outside of working hours for Australia and many other Member States in our region. We're particularly concerned about the implications that this creates for transparency and participation in the process, especially when all Member States should have the same practical opportunities for contributing to the preparation and finalisation of the political declaration.

Australia encourages the co-facilitators to explore opportunities for a more inclusive and outcomes-focussed process for future consultations wherever possible. For instance, we would welcome the effective use of written inputs whereby Member States are given the opportunity to clearly articulate their views in writing, with these views then translated into items that build upon the work done to date.

We ultimately look forward to working constructively with the co-facilitators and other Member States to reach a favourable and consensus-based outcome that is in line with the mandate of the Resolution.

Thank you Co-facilitators