



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE EL SALVADOR
ANTE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS

26 March 2020

Excellency,

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to refer to the current evolving COVID-19 pandemic situation that has shown an unprecedented challenge for most of the United Nations Member States and I would like to bring to your attention the following:

The Republic of El Salvador reaffirms the importance of the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and the recognition of the inherent dignity, equal and inalienable rights of all humans as a foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.

In this sense, article one of the Constitution of the Republic of El Salvador states that: “*El Salvador recognizes the individual as the source and object of the activity of the State, which is organized for the attainment of justice, legal security and the common good*” (first paragraph). Furthermore, article 65 establishes that health of the inhabitants of the Republic constitutes a common good, therefore the State and the people are obligated to safeguard its conservation and restoration.

In light of the recent statement from the World Health Organization (WHO) that declared COVID-19 pandemic, my Government committed to adopt the appropriate measures in order to reassure the protection of this fundamental right within its territory from any internal or external risks.

HIS EXCELLENCY
ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE
UNITED NATIONS

On that basis and in view of the obligation established in article 4, paragraph 3 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Republic of El Salvador wishes to inform that, since March 14th of this current year, the Legislative Assembly has declared a *national state of emergency, public calamity and disaster* for a period of 30 days due to the imminent risk of COVID-19 pandemic.

Legislative decree No. 593, published in Official Journal No.52, Volume 426 of 14 march 2020, *inter alia* states that in order to attend this emergency, the following immediate measures must be followed:

- The Ministry of Health will execute all necessary actions in order to implement the National Plan of Prevention, Containment and Response to the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore it should provide the necessary public services to avoid its spread among the inhabitants of the Republic;
- Any natural person, whatever their means of transport, should limit their circulation among affected areas which are properly identified by the sanitary cordons;
- Crowd gatherings are prohibited and so are any public entertainment events, meetings or events that might put into risk the health of the inhabitants;
- Salvadoran Consumer Protection Authority must control the prices set upon any article, goods and services that are related to the prevention, treatment, containment and attention to the COVID-19 pandemic in order to avoid any illegal hoarding upon them;
- The Ministry of Health will provide medical examination, with trained and qualified personnel, to any suspected person who might show symptoms of the disease, anyone who has been exposed or tested positive for COVID-19. In this case, the Ministry has the responsibility to appoint this person into a compulsory quarantine according to the international health standards.
- Quarantine facilities and centres must guard proper health conditions and infrastructure in order to provide medical assistance with dignity to everyone who is in them, considering their physical and mental health.

In addition, the Executive branch of El Salvador has issued several decrees concerning the regulation of this state of emergency, taking into account the safeguard of individuals' rights. Among

those measures Executive decree number 12, published in Official Journal No.49, Volume 426 of 11 march 2020, reaffirms over all Salvadoran territory a national state of emergency due to the imminent risk of the COVID-19 pandemic. By doing so, the National system for Civil Protection, Disaster Prevention, Mitigation and Response, public institutions, relief personnel and humanitarian entities will provide the support that is needed for the prevention, attention and control of the COVID-19, particularly, concerning health, food and availability of public places to ensure medical attention to people.

All inhabitants must collaborate and follow the current provisions and further instructions issued by local authorities. Violations to these norms will carry criminal, civil and administrative liability.

To ensure the strict order, National Civil Police will provide its support to the national system for civil protection, disaster prevention, mitigation and response in order to avoid a potentially threatening situation.

Furthermore, executive Decree No. 12 emitted by the Ministry of Health, published in Official Journal No.59, volume 426 of 21 march 2020, establishes extraordinary measures of prevention and containment of COVID-19 such as:

- a) the recognition of all national territory as an area subject to health inspection;
- b) Limitation of the freedom of movement to any natural person due to the rapidly evolving risk of the COVID-19, except those who gather the specific conditions defined within the provisions of the aforementioned Decree;
- c) A list of legal persons that are considered as an exception to such prohibition as long as their activities are focused to satisfy the need and health of all inhabitants: textile industry, call centers focused on supermarket home delivery schemes, food delivery, airline services, electricity, bank, financial and medical services; security and transport services.

For additional information, please find attached the aforementioned legislative and executive decrees which reflect the complete list of measures that are being informed by El Salvador and we shall continue to inform about any other subsequent provisions.

Excellency,

El Salvador recognizes that the international community is facing challenging times. It is now, more than ever, when States must focus all their efforts in reassuring the protection of human and fundamental rights in light of this pandemic. Therefore, my Government expresses its firm belief that,

even in this threatening situation, the protection of all inhabitants can be assured by adopting these extraordinary measures, bearing in mind the importance of respecting human dignity.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurance of my highest consideration.



EGRISELDA LÓPEZ

Ambassador

Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations

