



12 October 2020

Dear Delegates, Points of Contact, Colleagues; dear CODATA Members;

As President of CODATA and with the support and authority of the Officers and Executive Committee, I am writing to convene an extraordinary, virtual General Assembly to take place at 11:00-13:00 UTC on 15 December 2020.

The first purpose of this virtual General Assembly will be to review the outcome of the vote on the constitutional changes recommended by the Officers and Executive Committee (see below). Second, a Nominating Committee shall be voted on and approved as part of the virtual General Assembly. Finally, the virtual General Assembly will also provide an opportunity to update the delegates on recent developments and CODATA activities.

Details regarding the agenda, virtual platform for voting prior to the virtual General Assembly and full procedures will follow.

The proposed changes to the constitution are necessary for the following reasons:

- 1) To clarify the procedure for changing the timing of the in-person General Assembly in the case of exceptional circumstances.
- 2) To increase the size of the Nominating Committee (from 5 to up to 9 people) to enable broader geographical representation and balance of expertise and gender.
- 3) To make the timescales relating to processes preceding the CODATA General Assembly consistent and aligned across the Constitution.

Precise texts of proposed changes are appended to this letter.

A briefing/consultation session to discuss the constitutional changes will be offered to the delegates prior to the Virtual General Assembly, and invitations to this will be sent in due course.

A list of Nominating Committee membership as suggested by the Executive Committee will be shared with the delegates by 15 November 2020 together with details on the voting procedure for the constitutional changes and to confirm the composition of the Nominating Committee.



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We will proceed on the assumption that there is no change to your nominated Delegate to the General Assembly. Please let us know if you would like to change your Delegate to this General Assembly. Changes in Delegates are to be advised to [hana@codata.org](mailto:hana@codata.org), as soon as possible and no later than 2 November 2020.

Yours sincerely,

Barend Mons, CODATA President



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# Appendix: Precise texts of proposed Constitutional changes

## 1) Timing of General Assemblies

### **Proposed new Statute 5.2a:**

A General Assembly must be held in person at least once every two years unless there are exceptional circumstances as determined by the Executive Committee. In such circumstances, the Executive Committee will propose an alternative timing of the General Assembly to Members for decision in accordance with the approach prescribed in Bylaw 2.

### **Purpose**

This amendment provides a mechanism to propose to members an alternate timing for the General Assembly to accommodate “exceptional circumstances” where, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, it is inadvisable to hold a General Assembly in accordance with the normal 2-year schedule.

### **Previous Statute 5.2a:**

A General Assembly must be held in person at least once every two years.

## 2) Number of members of the Nomination Committee

### **Proposed new Statute 11.2:**

The Nominating Committee shall consist of between five and nine members with sufficient experience with CODATA to perform the role effectively.

### **Purpose**

This amendment proposes an increase in the number of members of the Nominating Committee to permit creation of a more diverse Nomination Committee with expanded geographic representation.



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**Previous Statute 11.2:**

The Nominating Committee shall consist of a total of five members with sufficient experience with CODATA to perform the role effectively.

### **3) Information Distribution and Consultation Timelines**

**Purpose**

These proposed amendments adjust information delivery timelines, and their representation in the constitution, to improve the efficiency of CODATA operations. They are made consistent between different activities (e.g. nominations to the Executive Committee and Task Group proposals) so that all information relating to the General Assembly is sent at the same time. All time periods in the constitution are now in weeks, months, or years (rather than in days).

**Statute 14.1: By-Law Amendments**

- a) Proposed amendments to reach the Executive Director 12 weeks prior to the General Assembly (instead of 90 days), and
- b) delegates must be notified of the amendment 8 weeks before the General Assembly (instead of 60 days)

**Statute 15.1: Statute Amendments**

- a) Proposed amendments reach the Executive Director 12 weeks prior to General Assembly (instead of 90 days), and
- b) delegates must be notified of the amendment 8 weeks before the General Assembly (instead of 60 days)

**By-Law 2.2:** Time allowed to return consultation ballots changed to 4 weeks (instead of 30 days)

**By-Law 2.4:** Time allowed to respond with comments on objections changed to 4 weeks (instead of 30 days)

**By-Law 3.2:** Slate of candidate nominations to be distributed 8 weeks prior to the General Assembly (instead of 2 months)

**By-Law 5.2:** Task Group renewal proposals to be solicited 6 months prior to the General Assembly (instead of 9 months, and aligned with the call for nominations to the Executive Committee)

**By-Law 5.4:** Task Group proposals to be send to Delegates 8 weeks prior to the General Assembly (instead of 6 weeks and at the same time as the slate for the Election)

