

Geneva, April 5, 2020

Dear friends and members of the UNWG

It has become quiet in Geneva and elsewhere. We stay at home.

The rules of social distancing must now be observed. Better would be the expression <physical distancing>, because we can and should continue to communicate with each other. I am writing to you because I would like to send you a sign of solidarity in our suddenly changed daily life.

I am thinking of all those who are now alone at home because of their age or poor health and I hope you are well taken care of by family members, neighbours or other volunteer help.

I am thinking of those who are now busy with children at home with home schooling and housework and on top of that are working in the home office.
Hang in there, be patient.

I am thinking of those of you who are now separated from your loved ones because the borders have been closed and travel has been restricted. I hope that talking on the phone and writing messages can keep you together during this crisis.

I am thinking of those of you who are in financial distress due to the crisis. I wish you quick and efficient help.

I think with sympathy of those of you who have fallen ill, wishing you a speedy recovery.

At present we are all facing limited personal freedom, which is a challenge for all of us. The uncertainty about how long this will continue and about what will happen afterwards can be agonizing. Let us support each other warmly during this time.

Here I would like to say a few words as a Swiss citizen. I have confidence in the measures taken by our government. If we all participate and behave in a disciplined manner, we will overcome this crisis without the need for a total lockdown. In such a case, the hospital beds will be sufficient for those in need.

Here are a few words especially for those of you who are only in Switzerland for a limited time. I can imagine that some of you have sense of insecurity. In times of crises one likes to be at home in the familiar culture. I fully understand that. I hope that you have nevertheless been able to gain confidence in Switzerland's crisis management.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the website of the [Federal Office of Public Health](#) in Berne which contains a lot of useful information about the virus. The [Geneva Welcome Centre \(CAGI\)](#) informs regularly about the decisions and measures taken by the government of Switzerland in the context of Covid-19.

I wish you all strength and courage to face and overcome this difficult time and, above all, I wish you good health.

Warm regards,

Bettina Thöni Zellweger, UNWG Honorary President