

Dear Members of the Residents' Assembly,

We feel we must bring to your attention a serious breach of trust which has happened recently between the seven members of your Working Committee.

There was a Governing Board meeting scheduled with very short notice to take place in Auroville on 18th January 2022. A note answering 10 questions raised by the Governing Board on points of Governance and the management and organization of Auroville had already been prepared and sent officially to the Office of the Secretary well in advance.

The day before, on 17th January 2022, all seven members of the Working Committee met in our office with the aim of discussing what would be presented to the Governing Board. We felt it was also important to try to discuss the current disturbing environment post 5th December and 9th December, 2021, events. In our diversity of opinions we could not agree on one common statement. Anu, Srimoyi, Partha and Arun, four members of the Working Committee, informed us that they will make one joint statement representing their views of the events and what led to them. We, the other three members, Chali, Hemant and Sauro, had already made individual statements in December and informed that these would then be tabled to the Governing Board in the upcoming meeting as well.

On the morning of 18th January 2022, at 10:30 (we had been told earlier that we would have to meet the Collector at 11), a mail was sent by Anu which, in addition to their statement, had a power point presentation to be presented by the four of them about Governance of Auroville, Selection of working group members and other general Auroville topics, as well as proposed action points as follow up to the last Governing Board meeting. The 3 of us had not been invited to be part of the preparation.

We were shocked at this exclusion of us as three selected members of the Working Committee of the Residents' Assembly. When we asked the reason for this act of exclusion and division we were told that there was no time to consult us.

As a first response we prepared a letter of objection to the Governing Board (see attached), with copy to the International Advisory Council, of our exclusion from the preparation of the presentation, and tabled it officially to the Governing Board. The Chairman then proceeded with the presentation, which in our view had errors of judgement and facts and was undermining the role of the Residents' Assembly. We then shared our views and made some corrections on the presentation with the Governing Board, including the topic of Governance, and we tabled other topics such as the recent 'agreement' that people have been asked to sign when going for a visa recommendation letter and the complaint about a number of Aurovilians that has gone to the RRO. Also, the question was asked: After all the achievements of Auroville and the appreciation received by many eminent persons and entities from India and the world over the 54 years of Auroville's existence, what has happened in the last six months that now the project is perceived as "a failure"?

We feel that this action from the other four members was a serious breach of trust and makes our work more challenging than ever. The current atmosphere of distrust is not healthy for the members of the Working Committee and the work it is mandated to carry out, and therefore it is not healthy for Auroville as a whole.

Chali, Hemant and Sauro
20 January 2022