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United Nations Nations Unies

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

DPA

TO: Mr. Gambari
A: Mr. Guéhenno
Mr. Egeland
Mr. Michel
Mr. Fawzi

DATE: 14 August 2006

REFERENCE:

THROUGH:
S/C DE:

FROM: Alicia Bárcena
DE: Chef de Cabinet

SUBJECT: **Middle East Strategy Group**
OBJET:

1. Given the gravity of recent developments throughout the Middle East region, the Secretary-General has decided to establish with immediate effect a Special Inter-departmental Strategy Group on Lebanon and the wider Middle East, based in DPA.

2. The Secretary-General has designated Mr. Michael Williams as his Special Adviser on the situation in the Middle East to chair this task force. The Strategy Group will report directly to the Secretary-General. It will also keep the USG/DPA and other senior officials informed regularly, and will offer policy advice to departments as may be requested. The Strategy Group will consult closely with OPRSG, UNAMI and UNSCO, through the appropriate channels.

3. The **primary tasks** of the Strategy Group are:

- Monitor and analyze major developments on a daily basis, to ensure the Secretary-General receives coherent and comprehensive information on the Middle East;

- Provide a range of policy options for consideration of the Secretary-General and senior officials to assist in the speedy development of appropriate strategies during the current crisis;

- To be the forum for dedicated analysis of issues arising from the Lebanon conflict and the challenges of the broader region;

- Provide headquarters backstopping and support for the good offices and mediation work of the Secretary-General and designated senior officials, including statements and briefings;

- Provide guidance to the Communications' group, as needed.

- To liaise with relevant departments and agencies as required to carry out the above tasks;

4. The daily Middle East Task Force meeting, chaired by the Secretary-General, will remain the forum that ensures that the Secretary-General receives timely information from all relevant parts of the UN system. At that meeting, issues may be raised that can be followed up in the new Strategy Group. Mr. Williams will be expected to provide the daily political brief to this meeting.

5. The Strategy Group will be established for a minimum of three months, to be assessed.

6. The Strategy Group will be staffed on a full time basis, but will also require that additional staff participate in the daily meeting and work on specific projects or policy papers as appropriate to their skills and to the substantive concerns of their departments or divisions.

7. I would, thus, appreciate the cooperation of each department in making those staff members available, as required, to ensure the smooth functioning of the Strategy Group.

Many thanks.

cc: The Deputy Secretary-General
Mr. Nambiar
Mr. Lopes
Mr. Williams