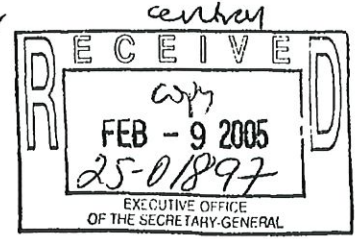


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DPT

FM  
cc KSK/MM



NOTE TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Proposed Gesture from Religious Leaders  
re UN Coordination of Tsunami Relief

An interfaith group, coordinated by Rabbi Potasnik of the New York Board of Rabbis and consisting of prominent US representatives of various faiths and denominations, has contacted me because it wants to make a public gesture of support to you and to the UN by formally thanking us for the UN's coordination of international Tsunami relief effort.

Although the group is flexible concerning the precise date and format, preliminary suggestions have revolved around a brief meeting -- essentially little more than a photo opportunity -- between you and a group of these religious leaders, which could take place at UNHQ some time in the second week of March. At this meeting the leaders would present you with an as-yet undetermined statement of support.

Under normal circumstances I would probably not recommend such a proposal to you, but these are not normal times. Given the limited demand this event would make on your time, and that any publicity arising from this gesture would be a well-targeted response to our efforts to combat the unwarranted criticism directed at you and at the UN recently, I feel confident that the prospect of your participating is at least worthy of serious consideration. The event could, of course, take place without your participation, but the prospects of generating valuable media interest in it would be greatly enhanced by your participation.

I might add that a public gesture of support for you from Jewish, Christian (Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant) and Muslim leaders could also contribute to the bridge building process that our *Unlearning Intolerance* seminars initiated with religious communities. I enclose a list of members of this group for your information.

If you decide to participate we would coordinate dates with your office and perhaps also with OCHA, and work with the organizers to establish a mutually convenient date and scenario. Should you feel unable to accept to participate, I will be very happy to invite Jan Egeland to join me in accepting their indications of support on your behalf.

*Shashi Tharoor*  
Shashi Tharoor  
8 February 2005

cc: DSG, MMB, KP, RO, EM, RS

