

PSG copy

Mar 10

UN0406
EOSG central

Note to the Secretary-General
(Seen and approved by JR and ST)

Ref: upcoming speeches

You may remember that a month ago we discussed some possible themes for you to tackle in major speeches during the year. After that, I circulated a list to colleagues and gathered reactions. Perhaps the most useful suggestion (from GMS) was that you should have at most two or three clear priorities for the year, and that these should be "repeated, echoed, developed", so that people identify you with them.

Reflecting on this, I came to the conclusion that we should start from one overall theme or "mission statement" which would sum up your effort not only this year but for the whole of your mandate. I have since learnt that such a mission statement, or something like it, is to be the subject of the SMG retreat the weekend after next. My own suggestion is that your distinctive theme or "signature tune" should be **the promotion of shared universal values, which the peoples of the world need if they are to work together in confronting global challenges.**

If you agree on that, I would suggest that this year the theme be developed under four main headings:

1. Economic and social: "giving a human face to globalization". This should deal with implementation of your Davos programme, and provide a positive but distinctive UN response to Mr. Wolfensohn's proposal for a "comprehensive development framework".
2. Humanitarian: the need to strengthen humanitarian law, protect civilians and children in conflicts, and improve the UN's capacity to cope with humanitarian crises.
3. Ethical and cultural: the need for openness, dialogue and mutual respect between different traditions and cultures, in order to identify the essentials of a shared global ethic.
4. Peace and security: the need to combat and reverse the apparent erosion of the collective security principle embodied in the UN Charter.



I do not suggest that only one speech be devoted to each of these headings. On the contrary, I think a series of speeches could be used to develop different aspects of each theme while reinforcing the overall message. At some point also, perhaps towards the end of the year, there could be an "over-arching" speech which would bring them all together and show how they relate to each other.

One other general point was made by Steve Whitehouse, the head of UNTV. He said that speeches often get better TV coverage, and are more widely remembered, when the speaker is shown not on a podium in a conference hall but in some outdoor setting which relates to the point he/she is making. I suggest this

991034

is something which should be borne in mind when planning your itinerary for the year. For instance, what you have to say about the devastating social consequences of the Asian financial crisis would get much more attention if you delivered it standing in front of shops burnt out during rioting in Jakarta. (That is perhaps an extreme example, more suitable for a few remarks to reporters than for a full-dress speech, but I hope it makes the point.) The Berlin speech on 26 April will be given in the Adlon Hotel, next to the Brandenburg Gate. We should arrange a photo op with the gate in the background.

Meanwhile, we need to agree, as a matter of urgency, on themes for the speeches coming up during April and May. I suggest the following:

- **Commission on Human Rights (Geneva, 7 April):** the importance of humanitarian law and its relevance to human rights.
- **Berlin Speech (26 April):** collective security – the need to replicate, on a world scale, the processes and institutions which have brought lasting peace to Germany and western Europe after centuries of conflict.
- **ECOSOC-BWI meeting (29 April):** the UN response to Wolfensohn.
- **Michigan Commencement (1 May):** the dialogue of civilizations and the importance of accepting diversity within societies as well as between them.
- **Howard Commencement (7 May):** peace and development in Africa one year after your Africa report. [If you agree, we might contact Prof. Skip Gates for some suggestions on this. You might also wish to address the Security Council first on this theme - perhaps on the actual anniversary (16 April)?]
- **Hague Appeal for Peace [NGO] Conference (15 May):** concluding remarks on peace and justice.
- **Official Centennial of First Hague Peace Conference (18 May):** collective security and the international rule of law.
- **University of Lund (27 May):** humanitarian law and human rights.

We then need to look for suitable occasions to develop the economic and social theme later in the year. You can come back to the ethical/cultural theme in your speech to the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies in June.

Please let me know if you are happy with this list, or would like to discuss it further.

Yours sincerely,

EM

Edward Mortimer
10 March 1999

cc. DSG, SIR, JR, GMS, ST, MM, AM, AK