

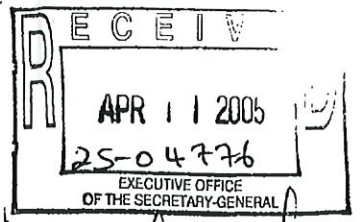
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NOTE TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL



Town Hall meeting with the staff, 5 April 2005

In listening to your exchange of views with the staff in your Town Hall meeting with them earlier this week, in particular your response to the question on whether we needed a more aggressive public relations strategy to counter attacks in the media, it struck me that DPI should have done more to inform you of our efforts in this regard. In case the opportunity should arise in the future, you may wish to be aware of the following points:

Please note - draft a brief to SG & staff to compare to conference transcript for their valiant efforts

- To counter recent attacks in the media, a crisis communications team has been mobilized, including senior staff from EOSG, the Spokesman's Office and DPI. The team sets a daily strategy, not only on how best to respond to particular media coverage, but also on preventive action;
- Guided by this strategy, arrangements are made daily for senior spokespersons -- primarily Mark Malloch Brown, Edward Mortimer and myself -- to appear on major television outlets and to make our views known through op-eds, interviews and letters in high-impact print media. Similar media placements by supportive third-party spokespeople are being arranged by the UN Foundation and other allies, in close coordination with our strategy team;
- To keep staff informed of these efforts -- both to boost morale and to share talking points that staff themselves can use in defending the Organization in their own sphere of influence -- a website entitled "Hot Issues, Cold Facts" has been launched on the UN intranet.
- DPI is developing an internal communications system, using the iSeek intranet portal for information management and knowledge-sharing. This should also help to keep staff better informed.

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Even as we continue these efforts vigorously and seek new ways to get our message out, we do acknowledge, as you did in your presentation to staff, that we are often outgunned by these media attacks. And we are conscious that while our efforts are more professional and better organized than ever, our impact on public opinion is modest. But we are trying hard!

Shashi Tharoor
8 April 2005

cc: Mr. Malloch Brown
Mr. Mortimer
Mr. Eckhard

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