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SMG

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MEMORANDUM

To: Deputy Secretary-General

Date: 4 February, 1999

From: John G. Ruggie
Assistant-Secretary-General, EOSG

Subject: Secretary-General's Priorities 1999

I am not sure what happened to the annual priorities document produced by a Task Force of representatives from all Executive Committees and cleared by the Executive Committees. Even though we are planning a Retreat to discuss long-term priorities for the organization, I see virtue in bringing closure to the annual priorities setting process, which focuses on the personal involvement of the Secretary-General during this 12 month period.

Thank you.



Dy SG

My copy attached.

[Signature]
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cc Mr. S. Iqbal Riza

*Madame
Mr. Rza is
forwarding to
copy.
(w attachment)*

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UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

MEMORANDUM

To: Madame Louise Fréchette,
Deputy Secretary-General

Date: 28 January, 1999

From: John G. Ruggie
Assistant-Secretary-General, EOSG

Subject: Secretary-General's Priorities 1999

Attached please find the final draft of the priorities document. It has been reviewed by the Task Force and is ready to go to the SMG if you decide to take it there.

Thank you.

cc Mr. S. Iqbal Riza



SECRETARY-GENERAL'S 1999 PRIORITIES

I. Functional

1. Humanitarian Challenges

Lead campaign in the context of the 50th anniversary of the Geneva Convention against the abuses of civilian populations, particularly the brutalization and abuse of children, in armed conflicts. Play a personal role in the consideration of humanitarian issues by the inter-governmental machinery, e.g. by addressing the humanitarian segment of ECOSOC.

2. Globalization

Encourage UN system to be more responsive to the multi-faceted challenges of globalization and interdependence. Highlight the social costs of globalization, especially on the poor, and advocate appropriate responses. Foster increased cooperation with Bretton Woods institutions and concentrate on issue-areas where UN has a special advantage.

3. Development

Advocate need for a comprehensive approach to secure more stable capital flows to developing countries and reverse decline in Overseas Development Assistance. Revisit the issue of debt relief. Continue to stress poverty eradication as a central goal of the UN.

Stress the continuing importance of long-term sustainable development issues facing small island developing states in light of the special session of the General Assembly in September on Small Island Developing States.

4. Collective security and human security

Promote integrated UN approach (including Bretton Woods) to security, governance, peace-building and development challenges. Stress synergies between different policy areas (conflict prevention, human rights, humanitarian relief, peacekeeping, peace-making, reconstruction and development). Highlight means to this end, e.g. the "strategic framework" and other mechanisms. Stress the human security and economic benefits of conflict prevention over conflict management and crisis control.

5. Sanctions

Facilitate emerging consensus on need for "smarter" sanctions and the reduction of the humanitarian costs of sanctions regimes.

6. Peacekeeping

Re-articulate the case for UN peacekeeping and the concomitant responsibilities of the Security Council. Draw attention to the disadvantages as well as benefits of peacekeeping by regional organizations. Consider holding high-level informal retreat on prevention, peacekeeping and peace-making for the Security Council.

7. Disarmament

Advocate universal adherence to CTBT, urge progress in nuclear disarmament and encourage global and regional action to combat the proliferation of small arms. Encourage Member States to sign and ratify the Ottawa Convention on Land Mines.

8. Human Rights and International Law

Promote ratification of the Rome Statute and the early establishment of a functioning ICC. Stress the growing importance of international law and institutions in a globalizing world, and the need to strengthen relevant global norms, including those established by the international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights. Issue series of major policy statements to mark the anniversaries of key human rights and humanitarian conventions.

9. UN, the Business Community and International Civil Society

Continue to promote closer engagement between the UN, the business community and NGOs. Encourage private sector to assist developing countries to overcome the Y2K problems and to formulate practices more sensitive to human rights issues. Support NGOs in preparations for the Millennium Forum.

II. Regional

General: enhance cooperation with regional organizations as follow-up to the high-level meeting of 1998, and consider attending regional summits.

1. Africa

Continue to give special priority to the enormity of challenges engulfing Africa. Vigorously follow up on the recommendations from the Secretary-General's report on Africa.

Stress urgent need for humanitarian agencies' unimpeded access to threatened populations in DRC, Angola, Sierra Leone and elsewhere.

Increase efforts to manage and eventually resolve DRC crisis.

Encourage the parties in Burundi to forge an agreement in the Arusha talks.

Consider personal intervention to assist UN efforts to end civil war and humanitarian crisis in Sudan, and to prevent the dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea from escalating.

Support ECOWAS peacemaking efforts in Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, and seek ways to assist ECOWAS enhance its peace-building and peacekeeping capacities. Pursue personal diplomacy to improve bilateral relationships (e.g. Liberia-Sierra Leone) in the region. Encourage the transition to democracy in Nigeria, and consider attending the inauguration of the new President in May.

Pursue implementation of outstanding elements of the "Settlement Plan" for Western Sahara. Continue efforts with Libya to break Lockerbie impasse.

Help mobilise action against HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa.

2. Asia and the Middle East

Promote the development of a coordinated and consensual international policy towards Iraq.

Use rescheduled visit to India and Pakistan to stress need for bilateral confidence-building measures as well as address disarmament issues, Kashmir and Afghanistan.

Consider visit to Indonesia (and possibly South-East Asia and/or Oceania) contingent on progress on East Timor and the domestic situation. Continue to monitor the social costs of the Asian financial crisis, and facilitate UN responses.

Consider renewed personal efforts in the Middle East if the peace process unravels. Seek to restore adequate resources for UNRWA.

3. Europe

Consider ways to help advance a resolution of the crisis in Kosovo. Stress that resolving Kosovo crisis requires cooperative action on the political, humanitarian and developmental fronts.

III. Institutional

1. Safety of personnel

Urge Member States to take decisive action to ensure the security of UN staff and humanitarian workers in conflict situations; urge all States to sign and ratify the

UN Convention on the Safety and Security of UN and Associated Personnel.
Devise means to extend protection to all UN staff.

2. Advancement of women

Accelerate process of achieving parity between the sexes in UN staff hiring, development and promotion at all levels. Ensure that UN policies are sensitive to issues of gender.

3. UN Reform

Maintain the momentum for UN reform. Vigorously pursue remaining agenda items i.e. the overhaul of human resources management, results-based budgeting, development account, etc. Continue to press Member States to pay outstanding dues.

4. Disaster reduction

Develop a better-coordinated UN approach to natural disaster reduction in the lead-up to the close of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. Consider participation in the international conference in China in May on lessons learned from recent major disasters.

5. Millenium Assembly

Focus attention of all parts of the UN system on the preparations for the Millenium Assembly. Reinforce the need to act on the recommendations arising from the various International Conferences of the last decade.