

UNITED NATIONS



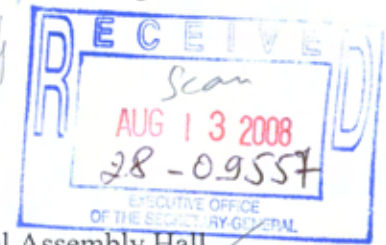
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The Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management

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NOTE TO MR. KIYO AKASAKA

Modified United Nations Guided Tours and Access to General Assembly Hall

28-09182

With reference to your Note of 4 August 2008 on the above mentioned subject, I take this opportunity to reaffirm DGACM's continuing support for guided tours at United Nations Headquarters. As you are aware, the plenary meetings held in the General Assembly Hall have always been open to guided tours, provided that there are no security implications relating to the meeting. This policy has been adopted also in recognition of the importance of these tours.

The Department for General Assembly and Conference Management has no control over the routes of guided tours. I believe that either the Department of Safety and Security or the Department Management could be the reference on "modified guided tours".

I look forward to continued cooperation between our Departments.

Sincerely,

Shaaban M. Shaaban
12 August 2008

cc: Mr. Nambiar
Mr. Kim
Mr. Falt
Ms. Kelley
Mr. Botnaru

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

NOTE TO MR. NAMBIAR AND MR. SHAABAN

Modified United Nations Guided Tours and Access to the General Assembly Hall

In anticipation of the forthcoming Capital Master Plan and the continuing efforts to optimize fire safety in the Secretariat building, I wish to note that guided tours at United Nations Headquarters are now limited to the General Assembly building, with effect from 1 August.

My Department has sought to make the modified guided tour as comprehensive as possible, including by moving a number of permanent exhibits from the Conference building to the site of the new route, and by introducing innovations to interest the more than 400,000 visitors who take the tour each year. We have also reduced the ticket price of the tour by one dollar.

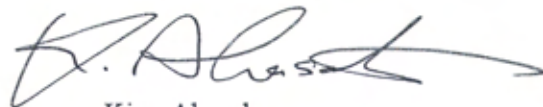
The new route has resulted in the curtailment of public access to the Security Council Chamber as well as to the Economic and Social Council and Trusteeship Council Chambers. As such, the General Assembly Hall is now the premier sight on the tour, and its access and viewing a crucial part of the tour anticipated and expected by visitors.

As you know, the General Assembly Hall is used for a range of different meetings and events, beyond those of the General Assembly. In some cases, access to the Hall (even for walk-throughs on the 4th floor) is denied by the organizers. In the light of the importance of the General Assembly Hall to the modified guided tour, I should like to request the Secretary-General's support and Mr. Shaaban's to my Department's appeal that access to the hall by tours is assured, except on rare occasions.

Any lack of access to the General Assembly Hall and its brief viewing by visitors from the fourth floor balcony will defeat our efforts to continue to interest and attract visitors to the United Nations during the coming months and years of renovations.

I will also be sending a note verbale to Member States informing them of the modified tour arrangements and the importance of the General Assembly Hall to the visitors' experience of the United Nations. I believe that my Department has an impeccable record of ensuring that our guides, and the tours they conduct, respect the demands of decorum and quiet on such occasions and, in particular, on walk-throughs on the fourth floor of the General Assembly Hall. We shall make sure that this record is maintained.

I would appreciate your support and cooperation.



Kiyo Akasaka
4 August 2008

cc: Mr. Kim
Mr. Falt

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