OUTGOING CODE CABLE

TO: VIJAY NAMBIAR, UNATIONS, NEW YORK
FROM: JAYA DAYAL, TRAVELLING WITH THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, ADDIS ABABA
DATE: 29 JANUARY 2007
SUBJECT: SG MEETING WITH SE MARTTI AHTISAARI; VARIOUS

Dear Mr. Nambiar,

1. Following please find the note of the 25 January meeting between the Secretary-General and Mr. Ahtisaari, which was held in Paris. Mr. Kim had asked me to send you the main points from the meeting, in light of the need for any follow-up. Please note the discussion on the forthcoming Policy Committee meeting, and suggestions from Mr. Guehenno and Mr. Sauer, Mr. Ahtisaari’s senior adviser, on possible items for discussion.

2. Please also find a note from Lamin to you in response to yours of 25 January on “Authority to handle Official Status Files.”

3. Many thanks.

Regards,

Jaya

(END)
NOTE TO MR. NAMBIAR

Authority to handle Official Status Files

I write in my capacity as Trip Coordinator, with reference to your 25 January note to the Secretary-General on this subject. The Secretary-General has decided that the requested documents should remain in the custody of the Department of Management, with copies to be provided to the Chef de Cabinet.

Thank you.

Lamin Sise
29 January 2007
Note of the Secretary-General’s meeting with
Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Kosovo Status,
held on Thursday, 25 January 2007, at 8:50 a.m. (In Paris)

Present
The Secretary-General
Mr. Guehenno
Mr. Kim
Mr. Sise
Ms. Dayal

Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, Special Envoy on Kosovo Status
Mr. Kai Sauer, Senior Adviser

Summary

- The Secretary-General and Mr. Ahtisaari discuss the process ahead between now and the submission to the Security Council before end-March of Mr. Ahtisaari’s proposal and recommendations on the settlement of Kosovo’s status.
- Mr. Ahtisaari provides the Secretary-General with a copy of his proposal to date, and says he would present it to the parties on 2 February, after which it would be shared with the EU and NATO. He provides the Secretary-General with a copy of his 22 January background note, which includes a timeline for the way forward.
- The Secretary-General and Mr. Ahtisaari discuss the possible political reactions to the proposal by the parties, the Contact Group, and the EU, among others.
- The Secretary-General and Mr. Ahtisaari discuss the transmission of Mr. Ahtisaari’s report to the Security Council, and the Secretary-General says he will stand by Mr. Ahtisaari and the report when he transmits it to the Council.
- The Secretary-General invites Mr. Ahtisaari to participate in person in a Policy Committee meeting on next steps on Kosovo in early February (at a date to be confirmed). Possible agenda items for that meeting are discussed.

Discussion

Mr. Ahtisaari said he had been very anxious to meet the Secretary-General in Paris and to explain the way forward vis-à-vis his proposal on the settlement of Kosovo’s status. He presented a copy of the latest version of his proposal, which included views from the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA), as well as a CD of maps that would accompany the proposal, and an executive summary.

Mr. Ahtisaari said the idea was for all to support the proposal at the same time that he engaged the parties in talks. He said he would present the draft settlement proposal to the parties on 2 February, and would at that time offer to make his colleagues available to visit Belgrade and Pristina to help explain it. He would also invite the parties to Vienna for a period of about two weeks to go through the plan. Mr. Ahtisaari said if any brilliant ideas were proposed that were acceptable to the two sides, he would then look at the draft again before sending it on to the Secretary-General. “I think the parties
will engage," he said, adding that the aim was to have a major meeting with the Contact Group on 1 March. Mr. Ahtisaari stressed that the settlement proposal was still a draft, and that the final version would come after one month of consultation. He said he would then prepare a separate status recommendation report. Mr. Ahtisaari said the month of February would be used for drafting the report, which would explain "what we are proposing and why." He said the settlement proposal and status recommendation report would then be ready to go to New York for translation, and that that process could be completed in two weeks, rather than over a longer time period, if the Secretary-General so decides. "I hope the document would be available to the members of the Security Council before the end of March," said Mr. Ahtisaari. "Why?" he asked, "Because the endgame won't start before the Security Council has it." Mr. Ahtisaari said at the time there was plenty of speculation about "What would the Russians say?" He said he had heard that they "had not made up their minds yet," and he stressed that he had heard this "very informally." Mr. Ahtisaari added that he had as yet to obtain a read out from the recent meeting between German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The Secretary-General inquired about the United States' and Germany's position. Mr. Ahtisaari said the German position was very firm, and that the "best chance of getting this through would be during the German presidency of the European Union through the end of June." He noted that Germany had very positive relations with President Putin, and he said he was very pleased that this was happening during the German EU Presidency. Mr. Ahtisaari referred to Michael Scheffer, the German "political director," who had told him that "we can count on German support." He said the "rest of the Contact Group is also united," and that everyone accepted the way forward. Mr. Ahtisaari said some argued that we should wait for the new government to be formed, "but, it will be the same government," he said, noting the results of the recent elections. He added that we also did not know how long it would take to form the new government, and that "it could take an enormous amount of time."

Mr. Ahtisaari referred to a 22 January background note he had sent to the Secretary-General, and said that both UNMIK and the KFOR Commander were concerned about any "unnecessary delays that could lead to problems on the ground." Mr. Ahtisaari said, "The problem with my proposal is that it doesn't spell out clearly what it is, although the implications [of the proposal] mean independence." He said, "independence to be supervised for the time being." It would be difficult in the weeks ahead, he said, adding, "I have to fudge the status issue when I go to Pristina and Belgrade, until the proposal in early March." Mr. Ahtisaari repeated that the proposal would be presented to the parties on 2 February, and would then be given to the European Union through Germany, and to NATO through the NATO Secretary-General. Mr. Guehenno noted that the proposal would in effect be public on 2 February. The Secretary-General said Mr. Ahtisaari would then proceed with consultations for the next month. Mr. Ahtisaari reiterated that he would engage in consultations and not in "negotiations," and said, "I have my doubts they will produce anything." He noted that the Kosovo Albanians were complaining. Mr. Guehenno inquired if, once public, Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica, who was in the process of forming a government with
President Boris Tadic, might seek to set conditions as a way to “lock in his potential partner.” Mr. Ahtisaari said he had heard that the Serbians would “go through the motions and would engage, and at the end would say they did not accept this.” Mr. Guéhenno inquired if the process of government formation was made more difficult by making the debate public. Mr. Ahtisaari said Mr. Tadic was “the kingmaker,” and that it would be interesting to see what he would say. He said Mr. Tadic had already said “we might lose Kosovo” and noted that, according to the polls, almost 50% of all Serbs knew that they had lost Kosovo.

Mr. Guéhenno inquired about the dynamics within the European Union. Mr. Ahtisaari said there were always those who grumbled and complained, and said “the Council of Europe is becoming like the General Assembly – with all due respect.” The Secretary-General joked that Mr. Ahtisaari should respect the General Assembly more. Mr. Ahtisaari said Romania was grumbling, but that he would speak to its minister in Brussels on 12 February. He said, “If the Europeans want to play a role in world politics, and if they are not united on this issue, then we should just give up.” He said in an aside that he had been asked to head a commission for the next three years “on how Europeans could be a major player in world affairs -- I haven’t said yes yet.”

Mr. Ahtisaari said the Contact Group had maintained its unity thus far, and that Europe and the United States worked very well in the Group. The Secretary-General said he had met with the Europeans and that some had cautioned about the timing of the proposal, given the process of government formation. He noted that the 2 February date occurred at the start of the government formation process, and he wondered whether some might use the proposal as a bargaining chip. Mr. Ahtisaari said he was well aware of this possibility, and noted that “Solana has been bombarded by Kostunica.” He said, “But we would lose all credibility if I don’t go now” and engage the parties for one month. “Serbia wants to delay this forever,” said Mr. Ahtisaari. He said the Serbians would make deliberate attempts to delay the process but the Contact Group was united. “Even Russia won’t argue,” he said, adding that the Contact Group wanted to show Russia that “we’ve done the utmost to engage the Serbs.” The Secretary-General noted that he could understand the United States’ position. Mr. Ahtisaari repeated that the Germans were firm in their position, that France “has been very firm,” as has been Italy, which understands that independence will come, but that it will be supervised. The Secretary-General said, “I think we shouldn’t lose any more momentum,” and inquired how Mr. Ahtisaari proposed to deal with any possible further delays. Mr. Ahtisaari said the Serbs might say that they could respond only after the government was formed, and he noted that they had to form a government within 90 days. But he said that even if there were to be a new election, “they would never get the 60% support,” which made him feel that the government would be formed. “It will be interesting,” he said, adding that he had always thought that Mr. Kostunica would be Prime Minister again – “But he may not want to be Prime Minister when this is decided.”

The Secretary-General noted that Mr. Ahtisaari would meet the Contact Group in Vienna the next day [26 January 2007]. Mr. Ahtisaari said that was correct and that he would then visit Brussels on 12 February, and NATO one week later. The Secretary-
General said he had received Mr. Ahtisaari's "draft report" via New York the day before, and that he would not return to UNHQ until 2 February, after a meeting of the Quartet [in Washington, D.C.]. He noted that a Policy Committee meeting on Kosovo was scheduled for 6 February. Mr. Kim noted that the meeting would take place after Mr. Ahtisaari had already presented his proposal. Mr. Ahtisaari asked whether he could attend the 6 February Policy Committee meeting, and the Secretary-General inquired whether Mr. Ahtisaari could attend the meeting before he distributed his proposal. "It would be appropriate and proper if the UN backed you, and we could go through the report," he said, noting again that he would be travelling until 2 February. Mr. Ahtisaari said this was why he had been anxious to see the Secretary-General now, and he said that the 2 February date was firm. "I would lose my credibility, as would the United Nations [if the date were changed], because I have invited the parties and made the date public," he said, adding that this had taken a certain amount of "arm-twisting." Mr. Ahtisaari said he was emphasizing that this was not yet his final plan, and that the executive summary, fact sheet and annexes would all be posted on the UNOSEK website. He said, "It [the documents] won't change dramatically," and that he did not expect the parties to move at all on the status issue. The Secretary-General inquired what the Policy Committee could focus on. Mr. Guehenno said issues for discussion could include how far the Secretary-General would wish to go during the consultations in February, as well as the remaining choices once the proposal was public. Mr. Ahtisaari said, "transference is an impossible issue." Mr. Sauer suggested that the Policy Committee could discuss the next phase, i.e., after the settlement proposal and status recommendation had been transmitted to the Security Council, as well as how it should be transmitted to the Council. Mr. Guehenno agreed, adding that another item for discussion could be the degree to which the Secretary-General would wish to be associated with the proposal. [Mr. Ahtisaari provided the Secretary-General with a copy of his 22 January background note, which the Secretary-General had not yet seen.] Mr. Ahtisaari said his interpretation of the Contact Group was that "it wants you to endorse the report, to help influence the non-permanent members of the Security Council. But I leave it to you. If you pass it on without any comment..." The Secretary-General said it would "be better that I stand behind you when I convey the report to the Council." Mr. Ahtisaari thanked the Secretary-General and said he appreciated that. He said, "My role is to protect you," and he noted that this had been one of the most complicated exercises he had ever been involved in. He noted the formation of the Contact Group, and how the Russian and US members had sought to provide him with deputies. "Kofi Annan went through the roof when he heard that and said, 'You cannot appoint my staff,'" said Mr. Ahtisaari. He said Mr. Annan had then gone down to Washington, after which they had agreed.

Mr. Guehenno said the Policy Committee could fine-tune the relationship between the Secretary-General and the Special Envoy, and how each of them could move the process forward, and "how each of you will play it from different departments." Mr. Ahtisaari said he was starting to do scenarios, including, for example, if the Security Council did not respond positively, or any other difficulties. He said it would be important to keep the Contact Group united, and he recalled that its membership consisted of the US, UK, France, Russia, Germany and Italy. He noted that of the Security Council permanent members, only China was not represented in the Group. Mr.
Ahtisaari said, however, that he met with the Chinese Permanent Representative every time he visited New York, and kept him well informed. He said he had good relations with the Chinese, and said, “In the end, China will see this as Europe’s problem.” Referring to the Contact Group, he said they were a very helpful and supportive group, but that “this was not a normal mission. We go through this so we can ensure that they can be on board.” The Secretary-General inquired about Mr. Ahtisaari’s plans in the weeks ahead, and Mr. Ahtisaari pointed to the work plan for engagement contained in his background note. He noted that he would visit London on 4-5 February and that he had been invited to see Prime Minister Tony Blair, but might miss him there if he were to travel to New York for the 6 February Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Ahtisaari inquired if the Policy Committee meeting could be held on 7 or 8 February, and Mr. Kim said he would check. Mr. Ahtisaari said he would prefer to participate in the meeting in person, rather than by videoconferencing, and he suggested that the SRSG for Kosovo also be invited. He said if the meeting was held on 7 or 8 February he would meet Prime Minister Blair in London on 6 February.

Mr. Ahtisaari thanked the Secretary-General and said he appreciated the opportunity to explain the way forward. He noted that South Africa would be president of the Security Council in March, and said he was prepared to visit the country and see the Foreign Minister as a courtesy. The Secretary-General said he might meet the Foreign Minister in Addis Ababa during the African Union Summit.

Mr. Ahtisaari congratulated the Secretary-General on his choice for Deputy Secretary-General. “Thanks,” said the Secretary-General, “You’re the only one to do so, everyone else criticized me!” Mr. Ahtisaari said he had a “soft spot” for Tanzania, his first ambassadorial posting, and said that the Secretary-General’s attention to gender equality was very good. “You will see me trying to balance the gender issue,” said the Secretary-General. Mr. Ahtisaari said he wanted to look at the gender aspects and recommendations in his proposal, which he said the Secretary-General would see in advance.

Follow-up action

- The Secretary-General to invite SRSG Rücker to the Policy Committee meeting on Kosovo, to be held in early February, at a date to be confirmed.
- On receipt of Mr. Ahtisaari’s report to the Security Council, the Secretary-General to expedite its translation and submission to the Security Council before end-March.

Jaya Dayal
29 January 2007