

central  
India  
WHO

Note to Ms. Barcena

Letters from the Secretary-General on Polio Eradication

1. In light of the recent new polio outbreak in western Uttar Pradesh Dr. Heymann from WHO has recommended that the Secretary-General send a letter on this issue to the Prime Minister of India. The letter proposes that WHO convene a meeting in Geneva with Indian officials to discuss polio eradication. Dr. Heymann informed us that this suggestion came from the Indians themselves. **Accordingly, please find attached a draft letter to the Prime Minister of India for the Secretary-General's review and signature.**

2. Dr. Heymann and his colleagues are also proposing that the Secretary-General sends letters to Afghanistan and Pakistan, two of the other endemic countries, as well as to Angola, which is, according to them, not taking sufficient action to combat the polio outbreak there. It is important to mention that Dr. Heymann feels that letters from the Secretary-General to these leaders would carry more weight than letters from the WHO Director-General a.i., given that WHO is "inter-regnum". **If the Secretary-General agrees, we can ask Dr. Heymann to proceed in preparing these letters. Please advise.**

3. Along with India, Afghanistan and Pakistan, Nigeria is the only other polio endemic country. Dr. Heymann suggests that a letter to Nigeria would be less effective than a message delivered by the Secretary-General to President Obasanjo in person. **We would therefore recommend that key messages on polio --which we will provide--be included in the talking points for the Secretary-General's bilateral meeting with President Obasanjo during the General Assembly.**

4. Dr. Heymann has also proposed that the Secretary-General prepare a short video message to all polio workers around the globe, thanking them and the polio eradication partners (UNICEF, Rotary etc.) for their efforts. WHO would work on a script and the idea is that the video would be sent to different locations where polio eradication efforts are underway. We think this gesture would be well received during the Secretary-General's final months in office. **If he agrees we can discuss the specifics with you. Please advise.**

Many thanks.

  
Paolo Galli  
11 August 2006

AD

- LETTER TO PM INDIA  
FOR SG SIGNATURE  
(ISABELLA)

- PARA 3: SSG will  
NOTE SUGGESTION IN  
TALKING POINT REQUEST

- PARA 4: EM SHOULD  
REVIEW AND ADVISE.  
KEEL

ROUTING SLIP

FICHE DE TRANSMISSION

TO:	Harriet / Lena / Elvira	
A:		
FROM:	ALICIA	
DE:		
Room No. - No de Bureau	Extension - Poste	Date
FOR ACTION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	POUR SUITE A DONNER
FOR APPROVAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	POUR APPROBATION
FOR SIGNATURE	<input type="checkbox"/>	POUR SIGNATURE
FOR COMMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/>	POUR OBSERVATIONS
MAY WE DISCUSS?	<input type="checkbox"/>	POURRIIONS - NOUS EN PARLER?
YOUR ATTENTION	<input type="checkbox"/>	VOTRE ATTENTION
AS DISCUSSED	<input type="checkbox"/>	COMME CONVENU
AS REQUESTED	<input type="checkbox"/>	SUITE A VOTRE DEMANDE
NOTE AND RETURN	<input type="checkbox"/>	NOTER ET RETOURNER
FOR INFORMATION	<input type="checkbox"/>	POUR INFORMATION

The letter for Isabella  
has been approved for  
processing.

On para 4. as advised by  
Kevin please copy to EM  
to seek his advice to SG  
+ ask him to prepare a note  
for SG's attention on  
This.

**Note to Ms. Alicia Bárcena**

Advice on the Note to Ms Alicia Bárcena from Paolo Galli on "Letters from the Secretary-General on Polio Eradication" (11 August 2006).

**Point 1.**

AB has to consider if it is appropriate that the SG sent the letter to the Prime Ministers of India in spite of the WHO Director-General a.i., as Dr David L. Heymann, currently Acting Assistant Director-General for Communicable Diseases and the Representative of the Director-General for both Pandemic Influenza and Polio Eradication and Mr. Paolo Galli both suggest.

If affirmative, I sent you a revised version for the letter to the Prime Minister of India in order to substitute the proposed one, in my opinion very tough.

✓ I understand how serious is the issue, and how important is to send a strong signal from the SG, however I prepared with the help of Roberta a softer version with an added softer first para for Alicia consideration.

**Point 2.**

The same consideration as above, AB has to consider if it is appropriate that the SG sends letter to the leaders of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Angola in spite of the WHO Director-General a.i. claiming for "no sufficient action to combat the polio- outbreak".

In the case AB agreed on the appropriateness, we have to be careful with the contents of the letter for a balanced weight between recommendation and reproach.

**Point 3,** I give positive advice, with no comments.

**Point 4,** it seems to me a very good initiative.



Daniela Simioni  
15 August 2006



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

22 August 2006

Excellency,

It was a great pleasure to meet with you again at the G8 Summit in Saint Petersburg in July. The agenda of the Summit included several topics of vital interest to your country and to the United Nations, among others, the subject of global health and infectious diseases. The adoption of the "Fight against infectious diseases" document by the Summit was indicative of the will of world leaders to unite on this vital issue.

It was therefore with alarm that I received news of the outbreak of polio in western Uttar Pradesh, which threatens the significant progress your country has achieved in its efforts to wipe out this disease. The outbreak also threatens global eradication efforts, since polioviruses of Indian origin have been identified in countries newly infected in 2006, including neighbouring Bangladesh, as well as Namibia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Recognizing the urgency of doing everything possible to eradicate polio in India during the coming 12 months, I would like to propose that the Acting Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr. Anders Nordström, convene a meeting on this issue in Geneva with key officials from the central and state levels of Indian government. Representation from your office at this meeting would be very much appreciated. If you agree, my colleagues from WHO will follow up with the Ministry of Health and Family on the specific details of this proposal.

I encourage your continued efforts to eradicate polio. I am convinced that under your leadership India can achieve the historic goal of becoming polio-free. You may be sure of the continued support of the United Nations in this endeavour.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Annan', written in a cursive style.

Kofi A. Annan

His Excellency  
Mr. Manmohan Singh  
Prime Minister of the Republic of India  
New Delhi

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

REFERENCE:

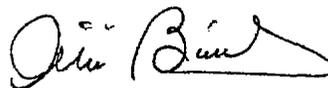
22 August 2006

Excellency,

The Secretary-General would be grateful if you could kindly forward the enclosed letter to His Excellency Mr. Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of the Republic of India.

A copy of the letter is attached for your information.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Alicia Bárcena  
Chef de Cabinet

His Excellency  
Mr. Nirupam Sen  
Permanent Representative of India  
to the United Nations  
New York