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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL  
CABINET DU SECRETAIRE GENERAL

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Excellency,

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I would like to thank you for your letter of 3 January 2008, inviting him to meet with His Excellency Mr. Giovanna Melandri, Minister for Youth and Sport of Italy, on the margins of the Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations taking place in Madrid on 15 and 16 January 2008.

The Secretary-General is grateful for your kind invitation and looks forward to the contribution the Minister would make to the Forum. However, I regret to inform you that he will not be able to accept owing his tight schedule in Madrid.

I should also like to add that the Secretary-General welcomes the initiative by the Ministry, "Give Kids a Chance" and its efforts to build partnership between DPKO and UNIFIL in this regard.

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

  
Vijay Nambiar  
Chef de Cabinet

His Excellency  
Mr. Marcello Spatafora  
Permanent Representative of Italy  
to the United Nations  
New York

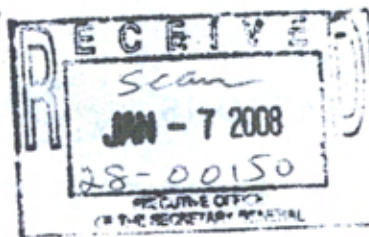
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to the United Nations*

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*Excellency, Your Excellency General,*

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Italian Delegation to the Forum of the Alliance of Civilizations that will take place in Madrid on January 15 and 16 will be headed by the Italian Minister for Youth and Sport, H.E. Giovanna Melandri.

As Head of the Italian Delegation to the Forum, Minister Melandri would be highly interested in meeting Your Excellency to briefly discuss Italian initiatives in the field of dialogue among civilizations and integration, particularly those involving youth.

The meeting would also be the occasion for Minister Melandri to update you regarding the project "Give Kids a Chance", about which I enclose a draft concept paper. This project is being promoted by the Italian Ministry of Youth and Sport, together with DPKO, UNIFIL, the Italian Football Federation and Lebanese Authorities. It aims at helping kids living in areas where UNIFIL is deployed to learn the values of sociability, integration, dialogue and mutual understanding through the practice of sport (football lessons). During the month of January a mission from Italy will visit Lebanon in order to start the implementing phase of this project.

I hope that your schedule will allow for a brief meeting with Minister Melandri, and my office stands ready to assist your office in organizing this meeting.

I take this opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the senses of my highest consideration.

*Yours sincerely,*  
*Marcello Spatafora*

Marcello Spatafora  
Ambassador

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H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon  
Secretary General of the United Nations  
NEW YORK



**Give Kids a Chance**  
Football lessons for the children of Lebanon  
*Draft Concept Paper*

**General Goal:** to help kids living in areas where a UN peacekeeping mission is deployed to learn the values of sociability, integration, dialogue and mutual understanding through the practice of sport.

**Beneficiaries:** kids and young women and men (age between 6 and 14) living in rural area and small town of Southern Lebanon. In the pilot phase (see below) age range could be limited between 6 and 10 (elementary school).

**Partners:** Italian Ministry for Youth and Sport, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Lebanese Government, Italian Football Federation, UNDPKO, UNIFIL, Office of the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace. Other partners, including from the UN system, may join at a later stage.

**Budget:** while it is not possible at this stage to present a budget for the project, it is important to underline that it would take advantage of facilities already available, including those set up by the peacekeeping mission.

The Italian Ministry for Youth and Sport and the Italian Football Federation (which is an active promoter of this project), will, in principle, provide the technical equipment, sport suits, balls, etc, and will cover instructors' travel and accommodation expenditures. Additional in-kind support is expected from UNIFIL. Other future partners, including governments, international organizations, institutional donors and private sponsors, might intervene at a later stage, to allow for the expansion and self sustainability of the project.

**Timeframe and duration:** the project will be developed in different stages. A pilot phase is needed in order to assess the feasibility of the project and determine in greater detail its main elements, their costs, etc. The pilot will focus on a single school, to be set up in an area to be identified jointly with the Lebanese authorities and UNIFIL. The number of beneficiaries will depend on the size of the local population.

The pilot phase should start once the necessary agreements among the main partners are finalized, and is expected to be launched in the fall 2007, preceded by at least one mission on the ground.

After the setting up of basic physical infrastructures, the school will start its activities under the guidance of Italian trainers, who will be responsible for the training of local trainers, who will eventually take full responsibility for the school.

On the basis of the evaluation of the pilot phase, the project would be replicated on a larger scale within Lebanon. Ultimately, the project will provide a "module" to be replicated in the context of other UN peacekeeping missions and applied also to other sports and physical activities.



**General Description:** the project aims at the creation of football schools, within the area of intervention of the UN peacekeeping mission in Lebanon (UNIFIL), in an environment where kids usually experience harsh conditions, including in terms of their own safety and security. Football is conceived as a tool to promote education and integration for kids aged between 6 and 14. Through football practice, kids who have been exposed to violence and conflict rediscover games as a basic component of their traumatized youth, and thanks to it, the values of sociability, integration, dialogue and mutual understanding.

The project is also addressed to kids with different abilities, who, properly stimulated by a well trained technical staff, and with the help and friendship of other boys and girls of the same age, can socialize, join teams and therefore introduce themselves more easily in the society.

The projects includes football classes, taught by qualified instructor, recognized by the Italian Olympic Committee or the Italian Football Federation. They will be entirely free of charge and open to all kids, regardless of their sex and of their social or religious background.

A crucial role in the project is the one played by the kids' parents, who, whenever possible, should be fully involved, including through the creation of a "Parents' Board", which could work in an advisory capacity alongside UNIFIL and the technical staff in charge of the centre.

Different groups of pupils, formed on the basis of their age and sex, would alternate in the centre to attend courses and to take part in the various events (tournaments, competitions, exhibitions, etc) promoted in cooperation with other local and international organizations.

**The role of the UN:** the UN plays a crucial role in the preparation as well as in the implementation of this project.

First of all, UNIFIL has a pivotal role in identifying suitable areas and providing, in cooperation with the local authorities, security conditions which are a pre-requisite for the entire project. In addition, the availability of in-kind support from UNIFIL in building the basic infrastructures is also of primary importance.

During the execution of the project, UNIFIL could continue to provide its support, including by joining the technical staff in charge of the centre and the Parents' Board in the overall supervision and monitoring of the activities. Finally, through UNIFIL, the entire UN Country Team could be involved in the project.

The Italian Government wishes to design and implement this project within a multilateral framework and as a UN initiative. The partnership with the Office of the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, as well as with UNDPKO are crucial to this end. Italy is ready to provide its leadership in the launching of the project, as well as in its pilot phase, but would very much hope to be soon joined by other governments and organizations in the next stages of this project, including other UN entities (such as UNICEF, ILO, WFP, etc).