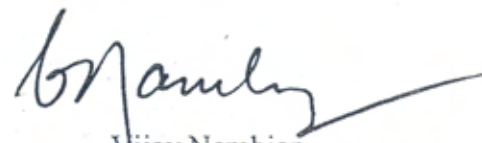


Note to Ms. Kane

Communication from PGA regarding UNRWA

Please see attached a letter dated 3 September 2009 received from the President of the General Assembly (PGA) on the subject of budget and staffing matters of UNRWA. In his communication, the PGA has referred to a letter from the Chairman of the UNRWA and has requested the Secretary-General to make every possible effort to assist the Agency and include the planned revisions in his budget request to the General Assembly for the 2010-2011 biennium. In this context, I would be grateful if DM could examine this request and suggest a draft response.

Thank you.


Vijay Nambiar
8 September 2009

cc: Mr. Yamazaki

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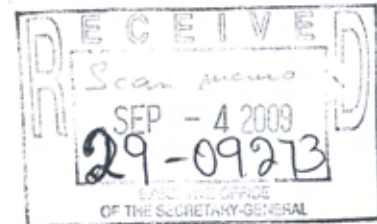
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THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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3 September 2009

Mr. Secretary-General,

I have the honor to refer to the letter dated 9 January 2009 from Mr. Tor Wennesland, Chairman of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency Advisory Commission, addressed to me and attached herewith for your information and consideration.

In his letter, the Chairman of the Advisory Commission expresses concern about the serious under-staffing of UNRWA that puts at risk its ability to fully implement the mandate given to the Agency by the UN General Assembly. In particular, I join the Advisory Commission in expressing my concern over the Agency's inability to implement successfully its far reaching Organizational Development programme if it is unable to obtain adequate additional resources from the UN regular budget in the coming biennium.

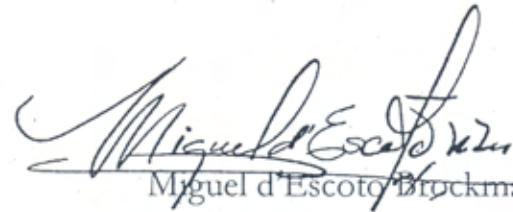
In keeping with the request of the Chairman of UNRWA's Advisory Commission to bring this matter to the attention of Member States, and since this is a matter of staffing and of budget, I am transmitting Mr. Wennesland's letter to H.E. Mr. Peter Maurer, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations in his capacity as Chairman-elect of the Fifth Committee of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly for its Members to consider and take action, as appropriate.

Mr. Secretary-General, the international community fully recognizes the vital role that UNRWA plays on behalf of the United Nations in alleviating the dire plight of the Palestinian refugees in the occupied Palestinian territory, Syria, Jordan and Lebanon. Having followed closely the work of UNRWA throughout the sixty-third session and cognizant of the dramatic humanitarian situation that persists, I share the view of the

His Excellency
Mr. Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York

Advisory Committee and many other Member States that the UNRWA proposal is both reasonable and necessary. For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you make every possible effort to assist the Agency in fulfilling its important mission and include the planned revisions in your budget request to the General Assembly for the 2010-11 biennium.

Please accept, Mr. Secretary-General, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann

- cc. H.E. Mr. Ali A. Treky, President-elect of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly
- H.E. Mr. Peter Maurer, Chairman-elect of the Fifth Committee of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly
- H.E. Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, Chairman-elect of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the sixty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly
- Ms. Karen Koning AbuZayd, Commissioner-General, UNRWA Headquarters, Gaza
- Mr. Andrew Whitley, Director, UNWRA Representative Office, N.Y.
- Mr. Jun Yamazaki, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller



REPRESENTATIVE OFFICE OF NORWAY
TO THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

His Excellency
Mr. Miguel d' Escoto Brockmann
President
United Nations General Assembly

9 January 2009

Mr President,

I am writing to you today in my capacity as Chair of the Advisory Commission of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). As UNRWA reports directly to the General Assembly,¹ I believe it appropriate to bring our concerns directly to your attention, to enable you to take whatever action may be necessary to keep other members of the United Nations informed.

As you may know, the Advisory Commission has been working closely with UNRWA over the past three years in support of its Organisational Development (OD) process. The OD programme has already yielded significant results in terms of improvements along its main pillars: human resources development, the programme management cycle, organisational processes and systems, and leadership and management.

Although the implementation of the plan is well underway, from the outset its successful fulfilment has been predicated on the Agency obtaining additional resources from the UN's assessed contributions regular budget. As background, may I recall, Mr. President, that in 1974 the General Assembly decided that the cost of the Agency's international staff should be charged to the regular budget of the United Nations for the duration of its mandate.² Following up on this matter, on 5 December 2008, the GA requested the Secretary-General "to support the institutional strengthening of the Agency through the provision of sufficient financial resources from the regular budget of the United Nations".³

As described in a letter dated 27 February 2007 sent to your predecessor by the then Chair of the Advisory Commission, Mr. Frans Makken of The Netherlands, in its budget request to the Secretariat of the United Nations for the biennium 2008-2009, the Agency originally sought 20 additional posts in order to sustain the newly developed capacity it has obtained through

¹ The Advisory Commission was created under GA Res. 302 (IV) of 8 December 1949, which also established UNRWA itself.

² See GA Res. 3331 (XXIX) B of 17 December 1974.

³ Draft Resolution A/RES/63/93 was passed by a vote of 172 to six, with one abstention.

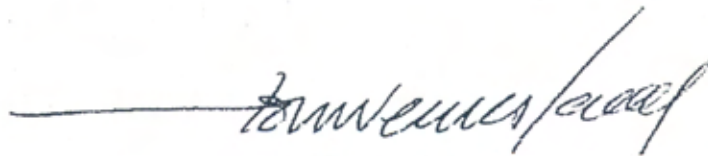
the Organisational Development programme. In this regard, I should note that considering the magnitude of its responsibilities in the Middle East, UNRWA is seriously under-staffed with international personnel, especially if comparisons are made with other UN organizations with similar mandates.

In the budget for the United Nations for the biennium 2008-2009, approved in December 2007, six new posts were provided, in addition to the 113 already funded through the regular budget. At the same time, the Fifth Committee asked the Secretariat to provide it with justifications for further posts for UNRWA in the forthcoming biennium, a clear indication of its willingness to entertain a new request for additional resources for the Agency.

As the original request was for the United Nations to assume responsibility for all 20 of the new posts being funded temporarily by donors on a bilateral basis, to secure full implementation of the OD programme 14 posts remain to be financed. The posts in question are specifically aimed at reinforcing UNRWA's capacity in the areas of strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, central management, resources mobilisation and support to its inter-governmental institutions. Approval of the additional posts will enable the Agency to increase the effective utilization of donors' voluntary contributions to its operational expenditure.

As chairman of the Advisory Commission, I should like to emphasise that these proposals enjoy full support of its membership. One of the issues of concern on the agenda at our regular session in November, in Amman, was indeed the full implementation of the Organisational Development programme, and the importance of securing the necessary international posts for this purpose. We hope that this proposal from UNRWA will therefore be included in the forthcoming budget covering the 2010-11 biennium to be presented by the Secretary-General for Member States' consideration and that the Fifth Committee will give it favourable consideration during the 64th Session of the General Assembly.

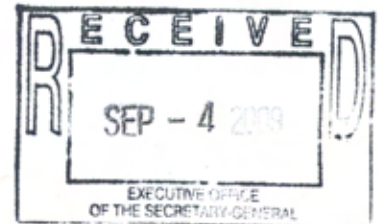
I would be most grateful, Mr. President, if my letter could be circulated to Member States of the United Nations represented at New York, through an official communication from your Office.



Tor Wennesland
Chairman of the UNRWA Advisory Commission



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



2 September 2009

Excellency,

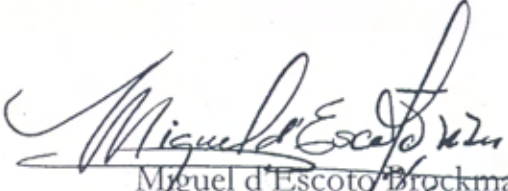
I have the honour to draw your attention to the attached letter dated 9 January 2009 from Mr. Tor Wennesland, Chairman of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency Advisory Commission, addressed to me.

In his letter, the Chairman of the Advisory Commission expresses concern over the serious under-staffing of UNRWA that hinders its ability to fully implement the mandate given to the Agency by the United Nations General Assembly. In particular, I join the Advisory Commission in expressing my concern over the Agency's inability to implement successfully its far reaching Organizational Development Programme if it is unable to obtain adequate additional resources from the UN regular budget in the coming biennium.

The Chairman of the UNRWA Advisory Commission has requested that I bring his letter to the attention of the Member States of the United Nations. Since this is a matter of staffing and of the budget for the next biennium, which will be discussed at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, I am transmitting Mr. Wennesland's letter to your Excellency in your capacity as Chairman-elect of the Fifth Committee for Members to consider the matter and take action, as appropriate.

I have also written to the Secretary-General for his support and cooperation on this important matter.

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


Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann

His Excellency
Mr. Peter Maurer
Permanent Representative of Switzerland
Chairman-elect of the Fifth Committee
Sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly

cc: H.E. Mr. Ali A. Treky, President-elect of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly

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

H.E. Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, Chairman-elect of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly

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Mr. Jun Yamazaki, Assistant Secretary-General, Controller