



THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

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4 April 2008

Dear Professor Campbell,

This is in regard to the "Dr. Martin Luther King: The Vision of world Peace and Social Justice" event, scheduled to take place this afternoon at Syracuse University. I deeply regret that I was forced to cancel my participation in the event with a short notice. Unfortunately, all available flights to Syracuse were badly affected due to severe weather conditions and, regardless of the efforts made by both our offices, it was not possible to find a good flight option to arrive on time to the event.

I am, however, pleased to send attached a message to be delivered on my behalf, which I hope will contribute to the principle and objectives of the event.

I was looking forward to meeting you and the other members of the Africa Initiative of Syracuse University and the Pan African Committee of Central New York.

I am extremely sorry for this inconvenience and very much appreciate your understanding since it is beyond my control.

With my best wishes for a most successful event,

Yours sincerely,

Asha-Rose Migiro

Mr. Horace Campbell
Chair, Africa Initiative
Department of African American Studies
College of Arts and Sciences
Department of Political Science
Syracuse University
Syracuse

ARM's autopen approved.

Stefania Piffanelli
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Silvia Gaymer /NY/UNO
04/04/2008 04:58 PM

To hgcampbe@syr.edu
cc aajsic@syr.edu, kspickar@syr.edu
bcc Anne Siddall/NY/UNO@UNHQ
Subject URGENT - Message of the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations to be delivered at the Martin Luther King event this afternoon

Dear Prof. Campbell,

Please find attached a letter from the Deputy Secretary-General along with a message to be delivered on her behalf at the above event. Please note that the message should be kept embargoed for distribution to the public until 6:30 p.m., assuming that it has already been delivered by then.

Silvia Gaymer
Office of the Deputy Secretary-General
Executive Office of the Secretary-General
Telephone: (212) 963-0638
Facsimile: (212) 963-8845
E-mail: gaymer@un.org



document0.pdf - Letter to Prof. Campbell



document0.pdf - Message of the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

UNITED NATIONS



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THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

KEYNOTE ADDRESS TO SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY'S COMMEMORATION OF THE
LIFE OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING
Syracuse, 4 April 2008

It is a great privilege for me to be here with you, the students and faculty of Syracuse University, on this solemn anniversary. I am especially pleased to see Professor Campbell, who was a visiting lecturer at the University of Dar-es-Salaam while I was a student there, and who I now proudly count as a friend.

It was forty years ago that an assassin's bullet took the life of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the greatest leader in the non-violent movement for civil rights, a man who transformed America and whose ideas transcended both his country's borders and his time on earth.

I was just a schoolgirl at the time of Dr. King's death, but the tragedy reverberated in my heart and across Africa. Although not yet twelve years old, I had already been profoundly inspired by Dr. King. I was attracted to the ideas he espoused: fighting for racial harmony, fighting against poverty in general, struggling for the economic empowerment of the poor with no regard to racial distinctions.

As I grew older and began studying his teachings at college and in law school, I became even more impressed by their universality. Today I'd like to share some observations with you about how Dr. King's thinking resonates with the aims of the United Nations, and how we are striving to apply these shared principles as we carry out our work.

One year before his death, in his speech at Riverside Church against the Viet Nam war, Dr. King called on countries to work together for the greater common good. He said, "Every nation must now develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole in order to preserve the best in their individual societies."

This is the central purpose of the United Nations, which brings all States together in a forum where they can rise above national interests, so that the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts.

In fact, there was a personal connection between the United Nations and Dr. King during the Organization's fledgling years. He had a close relationship with another great African-American Nobel Peace Laureate: Ralph Bunche. Mr. Bunche was the United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. He participated in the great march on Washington and other civil rights actions led by Dr. King.

Forty years ago today, Ralph Bunche was attending a meeting of the UN Security Council when he heard the shattering news of Dr. King's assassination.

He saw the scope of this colossal tragedy not only in terms of its impact on the United States but in all of its global dimensions. "The world," Mr. Bunche said, "has lost one of its most earnest, respected and commanding voices in the allied causes of peace, freedom and the dignity of man."

Ralph Bunche was outraged by the atrocity of this killing, saying "The world's leading contemporary exponent of non-violence is now gone, all too ironically by an act of savage violence."

Back in 1965, Ralph Bunche had been there at the Statehouse in Montgomery lending his voice to Dr. King's work. First he paid tribute to Dr. King's "superlative leadership." And then he threw the weight of the United Nations behind the cause. He said, and I quote, "In the UN we have known from the beginning that secure foundations for peace in the world can be built only upon the principle and practice of equal rights and status for all peoples, respect and dignity for all." End quote.

He was declaring that the international community shared the values and goals of the civil rights movement. "The world," Mr. Bunche told the marchers, "is overwhelmingly with us."

These words have special meaning now, in 2008, as we mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Dr. King's legacy and this most valuable document are both profound and timeless statements on the civil rights – the human rights – of all people.

And Dr. King drew the links between human rights, peace and prosperity. He rejected the slogan of militants – "burn, baby, burn" – and replaced it with a cry for education and economic advancement, telling students to "learn, baby, learn so you can earn, baby earn."

He advocated economic security for all poor people, proclaiming: "The time has come for us to civilize ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty."

This eloquent clarion call for an end to the scourge of poverty still resounds at the United Nations. At the dawn of the millennium, national leaders from across the world met at UN Headquarters and made a solemn pledge that in some ways echoes the words of Dr. King. In their Millennium Declaration, these leaders from countries as different geographically and physically and politically as you can imagine got together and said,

We recognize that, in addition to our separate responsibilities to our individual societies, we have a collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level. As leaders we have a duty therefore to all the world's people, especially the most vulnerable and, in particular, the children of the world, to whom the future belongs.

They established series of targets called the Millennium Development Goals, calling for drastic cuts in poverty, HIV/AIDS prevalence, maternal and child mortality rates and other social ills. And they set a specific timetable, calling for concrete achievements by the year 2015.

The aim was to forge a great partnership of countries working to help each other in the interests of humanity as a whole.

I want to be clear that this is not philanthropy or welfare on behalf of poor States that cannot help themselves. Quite the opposite. There is much we can learn from developing regions, especially in Africa.

Speaking as a senior United Nations official and an African, I say with confidence that I am optimistic about my continent. Over the past five years, sub-Saharan African countries have posted some of their most impressive macroeconomic results of the past 40 years.

Recent improvements in growth and economic stability across the continent have generated real successes in our efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals. These include expanded HIV/AIDS treatment, increased agricultural productivity, better access to water and sanitation, and initiatives that are having a tangible impact on problems like controlling malaria and ending user fees for primary education.

Malawi has drastically reduced child mortality rates and increased agricultural productivity, and Senegal is making rapid progress towards meeting the water and sanitation MDG targets. My own country, Tanzania, along with Ghana, Kenya and Zambia, have made major advances in primary education. These are a few examples among many.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is chairing an MDG Africa Steering Group bringing together a powerful combination of international financial institutions and other pillars of development to build on these successes. I am the chair of its Africa Working Group, which is pursuing concrete results.

Last month, we hammered out a set of proposals for African governments, including calling for a "green revolution" across the continent to accelerate economic growth and fight hunger.

Because even as we hail the tremendous progress Africa has achieved, we have to confront many challenges still facing the continent. We need to do much more in order to realize the enormous potential of Africa, a continent that is so rich in natural resources and human ingenuity.

We are likely to reach our Millennium Development Goal of cutting poverty by half in almost all regions, except sub-Saharan Africa. But we are managing to advance. We are halting the relentless increase in the number of poor. The proportion of poor is also declining, but not fast enough.

It is important to understand this problem in its proper historical context.

Last month, the United Nations held a solemn observance of the International Day of Remembrance for Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. We were honored by the presence of Harry Belafonte, who as you all know was a major supporter and close confidant of Dr. King.

At the commemoration, the Secretary-General spoke about the enormous human tragedy of slavery. But he also pointed out that this chapter in history is all the more reprehensible because the trade yielded significant prosperity in countries where slavery was perpetrated under colour of law. Of course there was no monetary cost for slave labor – but there was a terrible price that we are all still paying in our battle against prejudices.

The Secretary-General told the ceremony that quote, “The slave trade left an indelible mark, not only because it offended the human conscience, but also because it was the result of a shocking complicity of nations that participated in the name of ‘commerce’ for 400 years.”

That some countries prospered through slavery is an established fact. But we are not asking for aid to compensate for the past. Aid has its place, but much more than aid we need trade.

African countries, especially, need a fair environment to trade their way out of poverty. A level playing field. They should earn fair market prices for their raw goods, like cocoa, and coffee, and minerals – commodities that are prized around the world.

We are calling on all countries to reach agreement on a new set of trading arrangements that leaves aside narrow commercial and political interests. This is the best way to contribute to the Millennium Goals: with a trade regime that promotes development.

We need to revive the Doha trade talks with a view to opening market access for agricultural products from developing countries.

We are advocating for improved access to markets and for cuts in agricultural subsidies in rich countries. Participants in the Doha Round of trade negotiations can jumpstart rapid progress if they take the decisions needed to advance this cause.

Fair market access is part of a true partnership for development, one that views people living in poverty as agents of change.

And when I say people, I mean most especially women. For too long, the immense power of women has been undervalued by economists. Women, especially African women, were seen only as a beleaguered population in need of help. I am not only speaking for myself when I say this narrow view is a gross miscalculation. African women have long been economic powerhouses and are increasingly demonstrating their leadership in all fields, from politics to medicine to law enforcement, and so much more.

Let's look at Rwanda. For too many people, the word "Rwanda" conjures thoughts of the genocide that tore that country apart fourteen years ago. But too few people look at what has happened since.

We know that Rwanda still bears the scars from the deep wounds it suffered in 1994. But with the passing of time, the country has made tremendous strides toward our vision for a better world in the twenty-first century. And it is women who are at the forefront of this recovery.

If we look at education, we find that just as many Rwandan girls attend primary school as boys. On health, Rwanda has cut the maternal mortality rate by about one third. Think of it – saving the lives of thousands of mothers each year. What a difference that makes for families, for daughters, for the future.

Politically, Rwanda has gone beyond most of Europe and North America in terms of gender parity. Women are leading at all levels. They make up 43 per cent of elected local government leaders, and hold 47 per cent of all seats in Parliament. Few countries can compete with this record of achievement.

In short, Rwanda offers an outstanding example, not only to other African States, but to the entire world.

We must learn from each other in a world that is more interdependent than ever.

As Dr. King said, "Through our scientific genius we have made of the world a neighbourhood; now, through moral and spiritual genius, we must make of it a brotherhood."

His injunction has great resonance in the current era of globalization.

We say it often at the United Nations: in this world where problems transcend borders, the only effective response is global. There are almost too many examples to cite. Terrorism, AIDS, poverty, racism and climate change take their toll with no respect for national boundaries, and no single country can ever hope to fight them alone.

Last year, the Secretary-General led an international effort to galvanize action on climate change, a problem that will impact not just our environment but our food supply, our water resources, population movements, the security of nations and the very existence of certain islands.

He banged the drum on climate change, traveling to countries that are taking measures to address it and also witnessing first hand the effects of global warming, including making the first-ever visit to Antarctica by a Secretary-General.

Mr. Ban said afterward, "I saw the heart-bursting beauty of ice shelves that have already started to break up. I was told that if large quantities of Antarctica's ice were to melt, sea levels could rise catastrophically."

He recalled damage in other parts of the world, too, like in Brazil where the Amazon is under threat, and Chile, near the centre of the famous "ozone hole" where fear of ultraviolet radiation keeps some children out of school.

The Secretary-General rightly said, "These scenes are as frightening as a science fiction movie. But they are even more terrifying, because they are real."

In September, he convened the largest summit meeting to date on the issue, ahead of negotiations that December in Bali. The Bali meeting produced agreement on a Roadmap for the future as countries try to hammer out a legally binding pact on greenhouse gas emissions in time to make it law before the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

This year, the Secretary-General has said he wants to focus on giving meaning to the international promises made at the Millennium Summit. He is joining forces with the General Assembly president to invite world leaders to another gathering at the UN to rally support.

The aim of these meetings is to build political will. We firmly believe in the power of people to effect change, but we also have to pressure leaders and scrutinize progress on the promises they make.

All of this brings us back to Dr. King. Reflecting on his short life always leaves one in awe of how much he achieved, and in despair of how much more he could have accomplished had he been allowed to live. It seems clear to me that the themes we have been discussing today, including economic empowerment and environmental stewardship, would have benefited from Dr. King's global leadership.

This irreplaceable man cherished every moment he had on earth. In that speech at Riverside Church, he spoke poignantly of the "fierce urgency of now."

Friends,

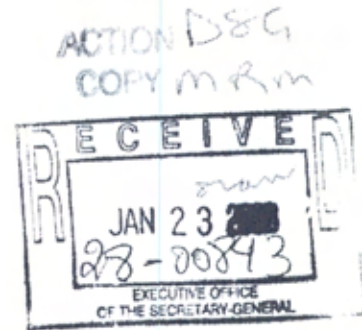
I submit to you that Dr. King's message rings more true today than when he delivered it in his lifetime. The best and only tribute we can pay to this towering individual, who gave so much to the world and paid with his life for his belief in peace and non-violence, is to abide by his words, to transform them into actions, and to "develop an overriding loyalty to mankind as a whole."

We do this not only for the sake of others but – as Dr. King taught – to preserve the best in ourselves.

Thank you.



SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES
Department of African American Studies



January 17, 2008

Her Excellency
Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro
Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations
United Nations
Room S-3862

Dear Madame Deputy Secretary-General Migiro,

I am writing on behalf of the Africa Initiative of Syracuse University and the Pan African Committee of Central New York (PACCNY) to extend a formal invitation to our event on April 4 or 5, 2008 commemorating the life of Martin Luther King and his contribution to peace, particularly in the context of the United Nations.

We hope Your Excellency will find the time to honor our university and Africa Initiative by a visit and address as the keynote speaker at this event.

Syracuse University is a premier center of knowledge in the United States and Your presence here would be greatly appreciated.

Respectfully Yours,

Professor Horace Campbell
Chair, Africa Initiative

Department of African American Studies
College of Arts & Sciences
Department of Political Science
Maxwell School
Syracuse University
211 Sims Hall, 130 College Place
Syracuse, NY 13244
Phone (315) 443-9353
Fax (315) 443-1725
Email hgcampbe@syr.edu