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ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff of the United Nations

From: The Under-Secretary-General
for Administration and Management

Subject: OBLIGATIONS OF STAFF MEMBERS

1. By accepting appointment with the United Nations Secretariat, which is one of the principal organs of the United Nations, staff members become subject to the duties and obligations laid down by the General Assembly and set out in article I of the Staff Regulations and Rules.
2. Regulation 1.1 describes members of the Secretariat as international civil servants whose responsibilities are not national but exclusively international and reminds them that by accepting appointment they oblige themselves to discharge their functions and to regulate their conduct with the interest of the United Nations only in view.
3. Regulation 1.4 of the Staff Regulations provides that members of the Secretariat shall conduct themselves at all times in a manner befitting their status as international civil servants. They shall avoid any action and in particular any kind of public pronouncement which may adversely reflect on their status or on the integrity, independence and impartiality which are required by their status.
4. Regulation 1.5 provides that "Staff members shall exercise the utmost discretion in regard to all matters of official business. They shall not communicate to any person any information known to them by reason of their official position which has not been made public, except in the course of their duties or by authorization of the Secretary-General. Nor shall they at any time use such information to private advantage. These obligations do not cease upon separation from the Secretariat."

5. All staff members are reminded that not only while serving with the Organization but after separation from service they must observe the utmost discretion in making statements relating to the purposes, activities and interests of the United Nations and in divulging information acquired in the course of United Nations service. Information acquired during service with the United Nations is acquired by reason of the staff member's status as an international civil servant. Publication of such information, even after separation from service, would therefore constitute a breach of confidence unless the necessary approval of the Secretary-General had been obtained prior to publication.

6. All staff members who separate from the United Nations must surrender to the Organization any documents or other papers which they obtain during their service as a result of their status as international civil servants, particularly if the information which the papers contain is of a confidential nature. Such documents and other papers remain the property of the United Nations, even if the papers were drafted by the staff member.

7. All proprietary rights in work performed by a staff member, including papers written by him, in the course of his United Nations service are vested in the United Nations under staff rule 112.7, and, consequently, it is only the United Nations which can authorize publication of such work or either acquire or waive copyright.
