

ACC decision on United Nations Staff Security and Safety

Over the past months, there has been a substantial increase in the number and gravity of attacks and threats against UN system staff including inter alia the murder of staff members in Somalia and Pristina, the assassination of two officials in Burundi, and the taking of hostages in Georgia

The Administrative Committee on Coordination considers this state of affairs intolerable and deplores the fact that the threshold of international tolerance for violent acts against civilian UN system staff continues to rise;

We, the Executive Heads members of ACC, decide:

- that a comprehensive approach needs to be fully and urgently implemented and concerted action taken to ensure the security and safety of staff, including local staff, in all duty stations;
- that such an approach requires action by Member States and the Secretariats alike, at Headquarters and in the field, at the political, legal, institutional and operational levels;
- that every effort will be made by all members of the system, and at every opportunity, to raise with Member States, as well as other parties to conflict, their responsibility and accountability for the safety of staff and the full investigation of security incidents;
- that designated Officials and Security Management teams will be held individually and collectively responsible and accountable for ensuring the safety and security of staff and for taking all necessary measures to that end;
- that all necessary steps will be taken to ensure that adequate funds and staff are available for security measures, including dedicated funding for security measures, preferably from programme budgets;
- that security and stress management training will be provided for all staff in the field and that such training is mandatory;
- to initiate a review of the adequacy, level and timeliness of the compensation to families of all staff members killed in the line of duty;
- that close and continuous inter-agency coordination with regard to the security implications of Y2K will be maintained;

- to closely monitor the implementation of these measures.

ACC also decides to bring to the attention of Governments:

- their primary responsibility for ensuring the security and safety of all UN system staff and their accountability for any acts committed in their territories affecting the security and safety of staff ;
- the fact that only 29 Member States have ratified the Convention on the Safety of UN and Associated Personnel and that consideration should be given to elaborating an additional protocol to cover all civilian staff of all UN system entities working in a given country;
- its appreciation to those countries that have contributed funds for security training and encourage others to do the same, so that more staff members can be provided with basic tools to survive, before they are assigned to the increasing number of high risk duty stations.

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