

NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Guidance on the relations between
Representatives of the Secretary-General,
Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators

In my directive to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, dated 31 August 1998, it had been indicated that further guidance would be provided on the appropriate relations to be maintained in the field between Representatives of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators.

Since that time, extensive consultations have taken place between DPA, DPKO, UNDP and OCHA, with a view to defining clearly what is expected in these relations. These consultations have been enriched, most recently, by the work of the panel on Peace Operations.

The attached note of guidance was submitted to me by the Chairpersons of the Executive Committee for Peace and Security, the Executive Committee for Humanitarian Affairs and the United Nations Development Group and I wholeheartedly endorse it.

I attach great importance to our efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations work in the field and I am confident that you will ensure that this guidance is implemented expeditiously in your respective areas of responsibility.



Kofi A. Annan
11 December 2000

TO ALL RESIDENT COORDINATORS

20 December 2000

Dear Colleagues,

At the Global meeting of Resident Representatives a number of you stressed the need for a clearer definition of the respective roles and responsibilities of Resident Coordinators and the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. After extensive consultations, the Secretary-General has approved the enclosed Note of Guidance on relations between Representatives of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators, which has been endorsed by the three UN Executive Committees on Peace and Security, Humanitarian Affairs and the Development Group. He has asked that the Note of Guidance be shared with you.

I believe that this Note will help to clarify those relationships. Obviously a note such as this cannot legislate for all situations. Personal relationships are an important ingredient in making such arrangements work on the ground. Fortunately, I know that I can rely on your cooperation to do all that is possible as Resident Coordinators to help ensure that these new arrangements are successful.

Should you have any specific questions on the guidance note, kindly address them to Alan Doss, Director, DGO, copied to your Regional Bureau Director and Omar Bakhet, Director, ERD.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Malloch Brown

Note of guidance on relations between Representatives of the Secretary-General, Resident Coordinators and Humanitarian Coordinators

1. This guidance applies in all situations in which the Secretary-General appoints a Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Representative of the Secretary-General (RSG), or other representative or envoy, for a country in which a Resident Coordinator (RC) and/or Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) are also in post. Part A (paragraphs 2-15) covers all situations in which the SRSG/RSG is resident in the country. Part A (i) (paragraphs 9-12) gives special guidance on situations in which the UN forms an interim administration or deploys a multidimensional peace mission to implement a comprehensive peace agreement. Part A (ii) (paragraphs 13-15) covers all other situations in which the SRSG/RSG is resident. Part B relates to situations in which the Secretary-General's representative or envoy is non-resident.

A. Relations between resident Special Representatives/ Representatives of the Secretary General and Resident Coordinators and/or Humanitarian Coordinators

2. The SRSG/RSG has the authority and the responsibility to establish the political framework for, and provide overarching leadership to, the UN team in country, within the parameters of the mandate established by the relevant resolution of the Security Council or the General Assembly.
3. The SRSG/RSG should establish and regularly convene a meeting of all UN entities in the mission area to ensure maximum coherence between all dimensions of the UN presence, as well as a consistent public profile.
4. Within the context of the agreed coherent approach in-country, the RC¹ is responsible for the planning and coordination of UN development operations, will maintain links with governments and other development partners for this purpose, will keep the SRSG/RSG informed, and will represent the UN country team at donor conferences, except on those occasions where the Secretary-General has decided that the SRSG/RSG should represent the United Nations.
5. Similarly, the Humanitarian Coordinator (HC) is responsible for the planning and coordination of humanitarian operations and will maintain links with the government (and other parties to the conflict) for this purpose.

¹ RC and HC functions are frequently vested in the same individual. The arrangements described in this guidance apply in all situations.

6. Information-sharing among the SRSG/RSG and the RC/HC is essential, including with regard to the flow of information between the field and Headquarters. Major policy reports should be prepared after consultations among them.
7. When a new peace mission is being considered, the lead department at Headquarters will establish an Integrated Mission Task Force (IMTF) or Joint Working Group (JWG) to ensure an integrated approach to the planning and conduct of the operation, including consistent policy guidance. At the outset, the task force² will ensure consistency between the terms of reference of the SRSG/RSG and the RC/HC. The Chair of the task force will ensure coordinated and coherent policy guidance to the mission and a free flow of information between the task force and the mission.
8. The SRSG/RSG and the RC/HC should resolve policy differences at the field level. Where this is not possible, the issue will be brought to the headquarters task force for resolution.

(i) Special Arrangements governing situations in which the UN establishes an interim administration or deploys a multidimensional peace mission to implement a comprehensive peace agreement

9. The SRSG/RSG will be responsible for giving political guidance to the overall UN presence as well as providing the impetus for a coordinated and coherent approach by all the UN components in the country. Policy guidance related to the objectives of the mission will be channeled to the SRSG/RSG through the Chair of the headquarters task force.
10. The SRSG/RSG, as head of the UN mission, will chair a senior management team in country.
11. The RC/HC will, whenever feasible, serve as Deputy Special Representative/ Representative of the Secretary General, on the basis of a decision at UN Headquarters.
12. The RC/HC will copy all policy communications with the UNDP Administrator and the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) respectively to the SRSG/RSG. The SRSG/RSG will, in turn, copy all relevant substantive communications with Headquarters to the RC/HC.

² In this text, "task force" is used to mean IMTF or JWG, or any other Headquarters-based group established to provide support to the field.

(ii) Special Arrangements governing other situations in which there is a UN peace mission

13. The SRSG/RSG will be responsible for giving political guidance to the overall UN presence as well as providing the impetus for a coordinated and coherent approach by all the UN components in the country. The RC/HC will be responsible for the coordination of development and humanitarian operations.
14. The SRSG/RSG will chair a regular inter-agency meeting at which the political, humanitarian, human rights and development situations will be reviewed.
15. The SRSG/RSG and the RC/HC will copy all relevant substantive communications to one another as necessary.

B. Situations in which the Secretary General's representative or envoy is non-resident

16. The RC/HC will brief the Secretary General's representative on major developments and the operational work of the UN in the country.
17. The Secretary General's representative will consult the RC/HC and the country team and keep them abreast of his/her activities.
18. The Secretary General's representative will provide guidance on the political context to the RC/HC and the country team.
19. In order to ensure an integrated approach to the planning and conduct of the activities, including consistent policy guidance to the country team and the Secretary General's representative, a Headquarters task force will be established. The Chair of the task force will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

30 October 2000