

16 January 1986

PMA/1986-001

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

... Attached are a number of newspaper clippings which I think might be of interest to you. They show the efforts of some of your staff to support the ideals of the International Year of Peace and, by example, may encourage others to take appropriate actions during this year. The media were clearly impressed by these efforts.

On 1 January 1986 in Hiroshima, Japan, three staff members - Shradha Howard of the Secretariat, and Adhiratha Keefe and I of UNICEF - each swam two kilometres in the frigid waters around the sacred Itsukushima Shrine on Miyajima Island. Because of the overwhelming response of the Japanese people and the media, and the encouragement of our colleagues, we swam again on 6 January. This time we chose the Nagasaki Harbour. The City Hall supported the swim and the Director of the Peace Museum was on hand for the event. Members of a 400-year-old cold-water swim club built a big bonfire to keep us warm on land, and some children entered the water for the start and finish bearing signs with messages of world peace. As in Hiroshima, the media were very enthusiastic, with four television stations and nine newspaper and radio reporters covering the event and requesting interviews.

I feel the success of these events was due in large part to the influence of the Meditation Group in teaching us to be respectful of different cultures and at the same time to strive to better ourselves, and the world, through positive actions.

We were visiting Japan as part of a Peace Concert tour. The fact that we attend the Peace Meditations in New York and that we would swim in such cold water to call attention to the International Year of Peace seemed to move many people. We were grateful for the opportunity to present a view of international civil servants as members of a oneness-world family.

Mr. Secretary-General, I hope that our contribution may encourage or inspire other United Nations staff to seek their own ways of supporting this most significant year.

Yours sincerely,



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