

United Nations Nations Unies

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Excellency,

I have the honour to refer to the Secretary-General's letter of invitation addressed to Heads of State and Government to participate in this year's annual treaty event, *Focus 2005: Responding to Global Challenges*. This year's event will be held from 14 to 16 September 2005 at United Nations Headquarters in New York during the High-Level Plenary meeting of the sixtieth General Assembly. Consistent with the themes of the report of the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, the treaty event will highlight the treaties deposited with the Secretary-General reflecting a broad array of interconnected concerns: ranging from terrorism to organized crime and corruption, from human rights to those addressing environmental and disarmament issues.

You may recall the successful treaty events which have been held annually since the Millennium Summit. Consistent with this tradition, the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs will organize another high profile ceremony this year also.

It is noted that, consistent with the rules of international law and the practice of the Secretary-General, a Head of State or Government or a Foreign Minister does not require Full Powers to execute a treaty action in person. Furthermore, where general Full Powers have been issued to a designated person and have been deposited with the Secretariat in advance, specific Full Powers are not required for that person.

However, where an action relating to a treaty deposited with the Secretary-General is to be undertaken by a person other than the Head of State or Government or the Foreign Minister, duly executed Full Powers are necessary.

Secretary-General's requirements for a valid instrument of Full Powers include:

- **Title of the treaty** must be identified;
- **Full name and title of the person** duly authorized to sign the treaty concerned (in the case of signature) or the relevant instrument (in the case of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession) must be specified;

- **Date and place of signature;** and
- **Signed** by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister for Foreign Affairs.

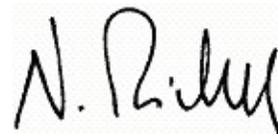
Full Powers should be submitted for verification to the Treaty Section well in advance of the intended date of the treaty action. Further information on Full Powers can be obtained from the *Treaty Handbook* and the *Summary of Practice of the Secretary-General as Depositary of Multilateral Treaties* (ST/LEG/7/Rev.1). These documents are also available on the “United Nations Treaty Collection on the Internet” (UNTC) at <http://untreaty.un.org>.

Information on the status of treaties deposited with the Secretary-General may be obtained from the *Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General: Status as at 31 December 2004* (ST/LEG/SER.E/23) or from the UNTC, which is updated daily.

The Secretary-General in his letter requested advice on the nature of any assistance that may be required by a State in order to undertake treaty actions or to give internal effect to the relevant treaty obligations. In this connection, I draw your attention to the web site containing information on legal technical assistance available within the United Nations system (see <http://www.un.org/law/technical/technical.htm>). Also, during May 2005, the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs will conduct a Workshop at Headquarters on treaty law and practice customized to meet the needs of government officials in relation to treaties against terrorism and organized crime.

Advice before **1 September 2005** on your Government’s intention to sign, ratify or accede to any of the multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General would assist us in making the necessary arrangements, including for appropriate media coverage. It is requested that appointments be made by contacting the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs at telephone: (212) 963-5047; fax: (212) 963-3693; or e-mail: treaty@un.org.

Accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Nicolas Michel
Under-Secretary-General
for Legal Affairs
The Legal Counsel