



Secretariat

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11 July 1986

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments

Subject: USE OF UNITED NATIONS PREMISES FOR MEETINGS,
CONFERENCES AND PUBLIC EVENTS

A. Introduction

1. Meeting rooms and conference facilities at United Nations Headquarters are intended primarily for use by meetings and conferences scheduled under the calendar of conferences approved by the General Assembly or scheduled by the Secretariat. Groups other than official United Nations bodies wishing to meet on United Nations premises must seek authorization, which will be granted only when such meetings are consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and are of a non-commercial nature. In using United Nations premises, due respect must be maintained for the dignity of the Organization. In this regard, all exhibits shall be in conformity with the guidelines of the Exhibits Committee.

2. This instruction designates the offices of the Secretariat that are to be contacted by groups other than official United Nations bodies in order to obtain authorization for the use of United Nations premises and services for meetings, subject to availability. It should be noted that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/243, section I, paragraph 7, no subsidiary organ may meet at United Nations Headquarters during a regular session of the Assembly, unless explicitly authorized by the Assembly. In view of the heavy programme of meetings during the Assembly session, requests by non-United Nations entities to meet during the session will not normally be granted.

B. Meeting rooms and conference facilities

3. Depending on the nature of the meeting, initial application for authorization should be made in writing, as specified below:

(a) To the Director, Interpretation and Meetings Division, Department of Conference Services (with a copy to the Chief, Planning and Meetings Servicing Section), for:

- (i) Meetings called or sponsored officially by the United Nations or organizations of the United Nations system, such as conferences of non-governmental organizations (request from the responsible Secretariat official);
- (ii) Informal meetings of regional or other established groups of Member States (request from the Chairman of the Group);
- (iii) Meetings of the Staff Council and its subsidiary bodies (request from the President of the Staff Committee);
- (iv) Meetings of member clubs of the United Nations Staff Recreation Council (request from the designated officer of the club);

(b) To the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Unit, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs; or to the Chief of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section or the Chief of the Visitors' Section, Department of Public Information (with a copy to the Director, Interpretation and Meetings Division), for:

Briefings of non-governmental organizations; and briefings of educational or public groups, respectively;

(c) To the Office of Personnel Services (with a copy to the Director, Interpretation and Meetings Division), for:

Staff meetings or staff activities other than those covered by (a) (iii) above;

(d) To the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, through the Protocol and Liaison Service (with a copy to the Director, Interpretation and Meetings Division), for:

Meetings sponsored by a Permanent or Observer Mission other than those covered by (a) (ii) above.

4. When the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Public Information, the Office of Personnel Services, or the Executive Office of the Secretary-General has approved a request for the use of a conference room submitted under the provisions of paragraph 3 (b), (c) or (d) above, the approved request should be forwarded to the Director, Interpretation and Meetings Division, in the Department of Conference Services, who will schedule the event in such a way that it does not conflict with other authorized meetings and will assign conference rooms accordingly.

5. For the use of the General Assembly Hall or the Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium, special arrangements are required, which are described below.

C. General Assembly Hall

6. All requests to use the General Assembly Hall should be made, in writing, to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, with a copy to the Director, Interpretation and Meetings Division, Department of Conference Services. When approval is granted, the Director of the Interpretation and Meetings Division will be notified and the assignment of the Hall will be made, so that scheduling conflicts may be avoided.

D. Dag Hammarskjöld Library Auditorium

7. In accordance with the understanding with the donor, the Ford Foundation, the Library auditorium is to be used "for seminars, lectures, briefings, showings of films and approved dramas". Reservations for its use should be requested by writing to the official indicated under paragraph 3 (a), (b), (c) or (d) above, except that all requests from Permanent and Observer Missions shall be directed to the Chief of the Protocol and Liaison Service. When initial approval is granted that will be conveyed to the Director, Interpretation and Meetings Division, Department of Conference Services, with a copy to the Chief, Planning and Meetings Servicing Section, who is responsible for assigning the auditorium, so that scheduling conflicts may be avoided.

8. In processing such requests, the Department of Conference Services is responsible for seeing to it that the function belongs to the category of event specified in paragraph 7, above; and that the expected attendance is in the range of 50 to 195 persons (195 is the capacity of the auditorium; for fewer than 50 persons, another venue will be assigned, in the interests of economy).

E. General provisions

Co-ordination

9. When an event is approved, it will be the responsibility of the approving department or office to notify the offices involved in servicing the event. These would normally be the Department of Conference Services, the Department of Public Information, the Office of General Services and the Office of Financial Services. While each servicing department or office will be responsible for co-ordinating its own service requirements, the overall co-ordination shall be performed by the approving department or office.

Costs

10. If the event requires that United Nations staff members or contractual staff be diverted from their regular functions to service it, or if overtime payments are incurred therefor, the organizers shall be held responsible. It shall be the task of the approving office to obtain estimates of the costs involved. These estimates will be pro forma, according to the level of services required; however, the final costs will be determined in accordance with the services actually provided. The billing will be performed by the Accounts Division of the Office of Financial Services.

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Insurance

11. For events that are held other than under United Nations sponsorship, it is essential that the approving office obtain the clearance of the Insurance, Compensation and Claims Section of the Office of Financial Services, which will determine whether the Organization requires the organizers to take out separate insurance to hold the United Nations harmless from any liability in connection with the event.

F. Conclusion

12. The present instruction supersedes paragraphs 1-3 of administrative instruction ST/AI/282 of 10 December 1981, entitled "Use of United Nations premises for meetings and catering services", which relate to the use of United Nations premises for meetings, conferences and public events, and paragraphs 1-4 of administrative instruction ST/AI/145/Rev.1 of 18 June 1970, entitled "Use of Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Library Building", concerning the use of the Library auditorium.
