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INFORMATION CIRCULAR

Subject: Identification of Potential Year 2000 Problems

1. You are, no doubt, aware of the problems possibly facing users of computers and computerised systems at the end of this year, as a result of the notorious **Millennium Bug**, often referred to as the **"Y2K" problem**. Briefly, the widespread use in computer software of an abbreviated year, e.g. 99 instead of 1999, may have unpredictable results when the year changes from 1999 to 2000, and the abbreviated year changes from 99 to 00, which computer systems may interpret as 2000, 1900 or even zero.
2. The United Nations Secretariat, as most organizations in the public and private sectors, has expended, and will continue to expend, a great deal of effort to ensure that we are not adversely affected by Y2K issues. For example, the UN as a whole is working to ensure that its telecommunications networks, as well as IMIS, will be operational on 1 January 2000. At UNOG, large computer systems such as Payroll are being amended, and a range of equipment, from lifts to fire alarms is being certified as "Y2K compliant". In addition, an inter-organizational task force has been created to coordinate action within all UN entities in Geneva (UNCTAD, ECE, UNCC, OHCHR etc.) to ensure that all other systems are identified, checked and amended as necessary.
3. However, there are some vulnerable systems **for which you may have direct responsibility**, and which therefore can only be identified with your assistance. This is particularly the case if you use a computer system and have developed software to meet your own needs, such as macros in WordPerfect or in Excel, QuattroPro spreadsheets, database applications written in Paradox or Access, or programmes in Basic, Dbase or FoxPro. Furthermore, you may even be worried that your computer, being several years old, is not Y2K compliant.
4. To help identify and resolve potential problems in these areas, and also to facilitate communication of other concerns regarding the Y2K compliance of your computer, the Electronic Services Section (ESS) of UNOG has developed an electronic questionnaire for use by all staff.

5. To access this questionnaire, simply visit the UNOG Intranet home page (<http://157.150.71.85>) and follow "2000 Geneva". Upon completion of those parts relevant to your needs, you will "submit" the questionnaire electronically via a screen button. ESS staff will analyse your submission and, when necessary, forward it to the appropriate technical staff, who will contact you and advise, assist, assure or adjust as necessary.

6. Persons who do not have access to the Intranet, or who would like to communicate Y2K-related concerns not covered by the questionnaire, may send e-mail to the cc:mail address 2000Geneva. Your message will be forwarded to the appropriate technical staff.

7. **We look forward to your cooperation.** It is **only** with your active involvement that we will be able to assist with identifying and solving potential problems with your own specific computer software and hardware.

Maryan Baquerot
Director
Division of Administration