



26 September 2001

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff
From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services
Subject: **United Nations Secretariat Building evacuation drill**

1. In one of a series of steps in the process of re-evaluating security at the United Nations in the light of the World Trade Center terrorist attack, an evacuation drill of the Secretariat Building will be held from 4 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. on Friday, 28 September. The drill will include the buildings and facilities of the complex from 42nd to 48th Streets, east of First Avenue. The drill is being held to examine our existing procedures, to test some possible revisions and to serve as a training exercise for all staff, including security personnel. The experience gained and the data collected in this exercise will be helpful in improving emergency procedures not only at the test site, but also at other United Nations facilities in the surrounding area. Next week, evacuation drills of annex buildings housing United Nations staff will be scheduled.

2. Your cooperation with the following points will be helpful in ensuring a successful drill:

(a) All staff will participate in the drill. Arrangements have been made for the continued performance of life and safety functions (i.e., the Medical Service);

(b) While the wearing of United Nations grounds passes is always important, it is even more critical during the course of this drill. Thousands of staff are expected to be moving throughout the complex during this exercise. Please make a special effort to have your grounds passes with you on Friday;

(c) During the hours of this drill, entry into the complex will be prohibited. The garage will be closed and frozen, which means that no vehicles will be allowed to enter or leave. If you normally keep a vehicle in the garage, please plan accordingly;

(d) If possible, wear comfortable footwear for the drill and plan to secure your valuables before the drill begins;

* Expiration date of the present information circular: 30 September 2001.



(e) Your fire warden will tell you the assembly point that you should report to when you leave the complex. For purposes of this drill, the two major assembly points are Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 47th Street between 1st and 2nd Avenues and from 39th Street south to 38th Street and then east to the FDR Drive;

(f) Those who are physically challenged or have any medical reason to be excluded from the drill should alert their fire warden beforehand. When the drill begins, arrangements will be made for transportation to the lobby by elevator;

(g) The commencement of the exercise will be communicated through the sounding of a pulsing alarm and an announcement over the public address system. However, if by 4.15 p.m. you do not hear the alarm or announcement, you should start to leave the complex regardless. At the conclusion of the drill, please make sure your fire warden is aware that you did not hear the public address system;

(h) Since the drill will commence at 4 p.m., for most staff the normal workday will be over by the time they clear the complex, proceed to the assembly point and check in with their fire warden. Staff whose work schedule extends into the evening hours will be permitted back into the complex when the evacuation is complete or when the drill is over at 5.30 p.m.;

(i) Fire wardens will review with their colleagues the evacuation routes from their specific areas in detail. However, in general, the facilities of the Headquarters complex will be evacuated as follows:

(i) *Secretariat Building (including the main cafeteria):*

- Odd-numbered floors will utilize the north stairway, you will proceed down to the first floor. From the first floor you will be directed to the first basement and then proceed through the Library tunnel. You will exit the building at the end of the Library tunnel at the staff entrance at First Avenue;
- Even-numbered floors will utilize the fire tower. You will walk down to the end of the tower, where you will continue on through the evacuation tunnel, which is an extension of the fire tower. When you exit the evacuation tunnel, you will be in the vicinity of 42nd Street;

(ii) *First basement (Secretariat Building):* proceed along Library tunnel to the staff entrance at First Avenue;

(iii) *First basement (South Annex Building):* proceed along Library tunnel to the staff entrance at First Avenue;

(iv) *Dag Hammarskjöld Library Building:* proceed to the first basement and follow the Library tunnel to the staff entrance at First Avenue;

(v) *North Lawn Building:* proceed up the emergency evacuation stairs in your area to the North Lawn. Proceed to the visitors' entrance. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;

(vi) *First floor (Conference Building):* proceed down one flight of stairs in stairway No. 6 to the first basement. Exit the building through the North Garden doors and walk up the steps to the visitors' plaza. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;

- (vii) *Second floor (Conference Building, including North Delegates' Lounge, Indonesian Lounge and GA-200)*: proceed along the second floor corridor to the delegates' entrance escalators. Security at the delegates' entrance will direct you;
- (viii) *Third floor (Conference Building)*: proceed down the nearest stairway to the first basement. Proceed through the Library tunnel and exit the building at the staff entrance at First Avenue;
- (ix) *Fourth floor (Conference Building — Delegates' Dining Room)*: proceed to the north fire tower stairs. Exit at the visitors' plaza. Proceed to the visitors' entrance. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (x) *First basement (Conference Building)*: exit the building through the North Garden doors and walk up the steps to the visitors' plaza. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (xi) *Second basement (Conference and Secretariat Buildings)*: proceed to the nearest exit and walk down one flight of stairs to the third basement. Exit the building through the service drive and proceed to 48th Street;
- (xii) *Third basement (Conference and Secretariat Buildings)*: exit the building through the service drive and proceed to 48th Street;
- (xiii) *First basement (General Assembly Telecom)*: exit the building through the North Garden doors and walk up the steps to the visitors' plaza. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (xiv) *Second basement (General Assembly Telecom)*: proceed up one flight of stairs to the first basement. Exit the building through the North Garden doors and walk up the steps to the visitors' plaza. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (xv) *First floor (General Assembly Building)*: exit the building at the Canadian doors and proceed to the visitors' entrance. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (xvi) *Second floor (General Assembly Building, including the Chinese Lounge)*: proceed down the ceremonial stairs to the Canadian doors. Exit building and proceed to the visitors' entrance. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (xvii) *Third floor (General Assembly Building)*: proceed to the emergency fire tower stairs located at the north (rear) end of the General Assembly Building. Continue down stairs to the visitors' plaza. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (xviii) *Fourth floor (General Assembly Building)*: proceed to the emergency fire tower stairs located at the north (rear) end of the General Assembly Building. Continue down the stairs to the visitors' plaza. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you;
- (xix) *First basement (General Assembly Building — General Assembly concourse and United Nations offices)*: proceed to the west emergency staircase. Exit building and proceed to the visitors' entrance. Security at the visitors' entrance will direct you.

3. During the drill, security officers will be deployed throughout the complex, including the staircases of the Secretariat building. Anyone experiencing a medical problem or other discomfort during the drill should seek their assistance. United Nations medical staff will be strategically placed during the drill.
4. The drill will end at 5.30 p.m., even if the evacuation has not been completed. Once again, no one will be permitted to enter the complex until the evacuation has been completed or at 5.30 p.m., whichever occurs first.
5. It is vital that at the end of this exercise, we all have a clear understanding of how the drill unfolded. Fire wardens have been asked to aggressively seek out your observations of what went well and what failed so that an effective analysis of the drill can be made. Towards this end, a survey form will be distributed by fire wardens to the staff after the drill. Due to the large volume, it will be impossible to analyse the responses from all of the several thousand staff located at the Headquarters complex; therefore, each fire warden will select a few people from his or her floor to respond. If you wish to volunteer, let your fire warden know. A vital part of the evaluation will be an understanding of how long it took staff to leave the compound. In anticipation that you may be asked to participate in the survey, please take note of how long it took you to evacuate the compound.
6. The Emergency Command Centre will be activated and chaired by the Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services.
7. The host country police, fire and medical services have offered their continuous support to this exercise.
8. Finally, your fire warden has been personally briefed by the security staff and has been kept current on the details of the upcoming drill. He or she will keep you abreast of them as well. Your full cooperation in this exercise will help us to make the United Nations Headquarters complex a safer place.
