

11 May 2001

**Letter through H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,
to H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General,
from the United Nations Security and Safety Service**

**Petition Request to Modify the Name of "United Nations security and Safety Service"
to "United Nations Diplomatic Police"**

The members of the United Nations Security and Safety Service, respectfully solicit your support in our earnest endeavor to have the name "Security and Safety Service" changed to "United Nations diplomatic Police", a title which we think more adequately reflects our work and function.

There is recorded precedence within the organization's history, where. Due to changing dynamics, the name of a department has been changed to better reflect its functions. We believe the time has come to adopt another change, as rapidly evolving realities of world events have served to steer the United Nations in the areas not envisioned in its formation. The proliferation of mission and peacekeeping assignments, special investigative commissions, nation building exercises, humanitarian rescue activities and world conferences have demanded a more rounded, better prepared and appropriately motivated staff member.

The staff of the Security Service has risen to the challenge and has met each assignment with a steadfast determination to succeed. Presently, the Service boasts a highly educated staff with broad academic and professional qualifications. Though some of our functions, such as giving support or delivering relief to disparate parts of the world, are unique to this Service, much are also similar to the responsibilities of law enforcement agencies with which we of necessity have to interact. Our responsibilities of providing VIP protection services, conducting investigations, armed escorts, and administrative oversight jurisdiction within mission areas, have served not only to highlight our capabilities, but also to redefine our mandate.

It is worth pointing out that the nomenclature of "Security Guards" relates to a specific time in history when the United Nations was formed. Immediately after World War II, nations of the World repulsed by war and military forces, wanted to establish an organization dedicated to peace. Therefore, originally, the United Nations Officers were called "Security Guards". Many years later, the nomenclature was changed to reflect the fact that we performed functions similar to that of Police and Military Officer, so the title "Security Officer" was adopted. However, we submit that the stigma remains even today and the downgrading of our functions is still a reality. The title of Security Officer implies a lower level function than that of Police Officer. Our work demands a constant interaction with other law enforcement agencies worldwide. It has been out

unfortunate experience while acting in an official capacity, to be the source of some unnecessarily awkward moments between host country law enforcement agencies and government contacts because in their culture, the designation of Security officer translates into a lesser qualified or ancillary security personnel.

We wish to conclude that in recognizing the merits of the forgoing, your support would lend credence to our request for a name change. We hope that our request for this tangible acknowledgement of the value of our work will meet with your support. We believe that current realities endorse our request for the next logical transition in nomenclature to "United Nations Diplomatic Police".

Please find attached, a list of signatures of members of the Service, which we trust will demonstrate our fervent anticipation for a successful outcome.

Excellency, your favorable attention to this matter will be greatly appreciated.