

SECRETARIAT NEWS



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"Year of Peace" swim

In this time of tightened purse strings for the UN, the first programmes often to feel a lack of support are the special events or observances. Three staff members from the United Nations in New York have taken the initiative to ensure the promotion of 1986 as the International Year of Peace. In March, Adhiratha Keefe, Sunil Davidson and Shradha Howard flew to Costa Rica and Panama as part of more than 25 "Swims for Peace" to draw attention to the Year of Peace. Their inspired efforts have taken these three UN staff around the globe in the last four months. And at their own expense!

"We're hoping to make people more aware of what the UN is doing for peace and to inspire others to make their own efforts for world peace", said Adhiratha Keefe. "We feel that in addition to our usual work at the UN we must do something more to spread the message of peace."

Keefe, a 38-year-old UNICEF employee, swam the English Channel in September 1985 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the UN (see "Secretariat News", 40th anniversary issue).

The two other swimmers are Sunil Davidson, also of UNICEF, and Shradha Howard, a UN Secretariat staff member in the Photographic and Exhibits Section, DPI. Both are training for English Channel swims later this year.

The three began their peace journey on 1 January with a 1.5-mile swim in the frigid waters off Hiroshima, Japan. As thousands lined the shore, they swam around one of Japan's most sacred sites: the shrine on Miyajima Island. Five days later they undertook another peace swim in Nagasaki Harbour where the swim was covered extensively by TV and other news media.

On their return to New York the Secretary-General took note of the swimmers' "intrepid endeavours in the support of the International Year of Peace". The Secretary-General also noted the swimmers' "admirable commitment, which they and their colleagues in the Meditation Group share for the principles of the United Nations and the International Year of Peace".

Inspired by this and other messages of encouragement, they have gone on to swim in eleven US states, as well as Bermuda, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, Panama, Costa Rica and Mexico. The local support and media interest continues to be impressive with coverage by nearly 20 TV stations and more than 50 newspapers.

Fun run

For an invigorating and fun-filled diversion, staff are invited to join their friends in the "One mile Peace run"--a healthy jaunt along the East River in the North Garden. United Nations, mission and NGO staff will run Friday, 20 June, at 1.15 p. m.; delegates and their spouses will run Sunday, 22 June, at 9 a. m.; their children will run at 8.30 a. m. (5-18 years of age).

Trophies for the largest UN department, office, NGO or mission team will be awarded. "Fastest team" trophies will be awarded according to the combined times of the top three runners per team.

Assorted refreshments will be offered immediately after the race. The race goes on rain or shine--all spectators are welcome.

Registrations will take place outside the DC and Secretariat Cafeterias or at the race site on the day of the event. For more information, call Bhima Hogan, 754-6597.

Peace walk

The UN community is also invited to join in the semi-annual "Peace walk" in the UN gardens on 25 and 26 June and in the "Peace run" on 29 June--a commemorative relay run from Lake Success in Long Island to the Secretariat.

The Peace walk is a silent, nation by nation relay walk around an area of the North Garden. The preamble to the UN Charter is carried by a national in each group and is passed on to the next group.

Ambassadors of some countries will lead their national groups and each participant will sign a copy of the Preamble to the Charter to commemorate the signing of the original Charter in San Francisco in 1945. All UN staff are invited to join the final international walk on Thursday, 26 June, at 1.15 p. m.

Each country has a scheduled time over the two day period in which its nationals will meet and walk. For further information, call Ms. Henry, 906-5600.

The "Peace run" is not a race, but a commemorative run to celebrate the International Year of Peace. Runners will stay in groups, carrying the flags of the Member States over the 16.5 mile route. Run for a long or a short segment of the route--or form a national relay team! Refreshments will be served at the seven rest stops along the route--two vehicles will accompany the group at all times to provide water for the runners and transportation between stopping points.

All the above events are sponsored by Sri Chintamani The Peace Meditation at the United Nations