

United Nations  Nations Unies
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR


TO: Ms Angela Kane, Under-Secretary-General
A: For Management

DATE: 11 May 2010

REFERENCE:

THROUGH:

S/C DE:

FROM: Shaaban M Shaaban, Under-Secretary-General 
DE: For General Assembly and Conference Management

SUBJECT: **Continuing unacceptable working conditions in the Albano**
OBJET: **Building**

1. I refer to a memo of 4 August 2009, written shortly after our relocation to the Albano building wherein we noted the problems with temperature modulation in the building, a memo of 12 November 2009 citing repeated problems with the elevators, and the minutes of a meeting held on 14 April concerning status updates on both these issues, as well as highlighting a situation with rodents and insects in the building.
2. I regret to inform that none of these issues has been resolved to date, and that the building had an emergency fumigation over this past weekend, as bedbugs were identified again, this time in over 90% of the floors in the building.
3. Despite the fumigation, live bugs of a different sort were found last night, and there is call for further testing today.
4. We continue to log incidents of staff being caught in the elevators, or of other elevator malfunctions, such that some staff now refuse to use the elevators at all, preferring the stairs to come and go from work.
5. It remains to be seen if the temperatures will be sufficiently comfortable once the summer season arrives.
6. Each one of these issues represents a serious lapse on the part of the organization's responsibility to provide a safe and comfortable working environment, but all three together border on a situation making the building potentially uninhabitable.

7. As we begin to reconsider the restacking of the Secretariat Building at the close of the CMP project, and unless dramatic action is taken to address the problems faced by the staff in the Albano Building, I will be forced to insist that the Albano staff be among the first set of staff to return to the Secretariat building. In my meeting with Mr. Adlerstein five weeks ago, I never agreed that the Albano staff will be stacked there. I mentioned the defects of the Albano building and informed Mr. Adlerstein that I cannot inform the staff in Albano that they will stay there so long as inhuman conditions of work as explained above persist. So, in the stacking proposal you sent to Mr. Nambiar on 4 May 2010, on which all heads of department were copied, I read in the appendix twice that "Based on initial consultation with DGACM, agreement has been made to retain the use of the Albano Building...", which does not reflect my discussion with Mr. Adlerstein. I even enquired about the possibility of housing the Albano Building staff in another building among those rented by the UN.
8. I request, once again, that you devote the necessary resources and attention to this matter urgently before the staff, who have been most tolerant over these many months, consider taking drastic measures of their own to bring attention to these issues.

cc: V J Nambiar, M Adlerstein, F Baumann, V Lewis