

United Nations  Nations Unies

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REFERENCE:

2 May 2011

Excellency,

I have the honour to refer to the Secretary-General's letter of invitation addressed to Heads of State and Government to participate in this year's treaty event entitled "2011 Treaty Event: Towards Universal Participation and Implementation" which will be held from 20 to 22 and 26 to 27 September 2011 in the Treaty Signing area in the General Assembly Building in New York during the general debate of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

The Treaty Event will highlight treaties deposited with the Secretary-General that cover areas of global reach, including forced displacement and statelessness, empowerment and protection of women, human rights, disarmament and non-proliferation, the prevention and suppression of acts of terrorism and organized crime, as well as sustainable development and the protection of the environment.

States are encouraged to utilize the occasion of the 2011 Treaty Event to demonstrate their continuing commitment to the central role of the rule of law in international relations. It is emphasized that the Event may be used to sign and ratify or accede to any treaty for which the Secretary-General acts as depositary.

It is noted that, consistent with the rules of international law and the practice of the Secretary-General as depositary of multilateral treaties, a Head of State or Government or a Foreign Minister does not require full powers to execute a treaty action in person. Furthermore, full powers are not required in cases where an instrument conferring general full powers has been issued to a designated person and has been deposited with the Secretary-General in advance.

However, where an action, such as a signature, relating to a treaty deposited with the Secretary-General is to be undertaken by a person other than the Head of State or Government or the Minister of Foreign Affairs, duly executed full powers are necessary.

His/Her Excellency
The Permanent Representative of ...
to the United Nations
New York



The Secretary-General's requirements for a valid instrument of full powers must include the following:

- Title of the treaty;
- Full name and title of the person duly authorized to sign the treaty concerned;
- Date and place of signature; and
- Signature of the Head of State, Head of Government or Foreign Minister.

Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession must also be issued and signed by one of the above three authorities, and should include all declarations and reservations related thereto. Full powers and instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession should be submitted for verification to the Treaty Section well in advance of the intended date of the relevant treaty action. Further information on full powers and instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession can be obtained from the *Treaty Handbook* and the *Summary of Practice of the Secretary-General as Depositary of Multilateral Treaties* (ST/LEG/7/Rev.1). These documents are available in the United Nations Treaty Collection at the web site <http://treaties.un.org>.

Advice before **6 September 2011** on your Government's intention to sign, ratify or accede to any of the multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General would assist us in making the necessary arrangements, including appropriate media coverage. I am attaching a list of all multilateral treaties deposited with the Secretary-General to enable a more comprehensive review of your country's participation in these multilateral treaties. The above-mentioned website for the United Nations Treaty Collection provides up-to-date information on the status of those treaties. It is requested that appointments be made by contacting the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs (telephone: (212) 963-5047; fax: (212) 963-3693).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia O'Brien', written over a horizontal line.

Patricia O'Brien
Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs
The Legal Counsel