

United Nations Nations Unies

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REFERENCE: LA41TR/221/1/STE

27 February 2009

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 the special treaty event taking place on 20 April 2009 at the Vienna International Centre, Austria, during the 18th session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The special treaty event will promote the universal counter-terrorism and crime conventions as well as the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel and its Optional Protocol. In addition, this event is aimed to further the implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

It is noted that all of the featured treaties are now closed for signature but are open for ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, each in accordance with its terms. To this end, the Secretary-General requires that a valid instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession include the following:

- Full title of the treaty;
- An unambiguous expression of the intent of the Government, on behalf of the State, to consider itself bound by the treaty and to undertake faithfully to observe and implement its provisions;
- Full name and title of the person signing the instrument; it must be signed by the Head of State, Head of Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs or any other person acting in such a position for the time being or with full powers for that purpose issued by one of the above authorities; and
- Date and place where the instrument was issued.

Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession should include all declarations and reservations related thereto.



Unlike instruments of ratification or accession, notifications relating to extradition, mutual legal assistance and prevention required by some of the treaties solely provide information under the treaties and therefore do not need to be signed by a Head of State, Head of Government or Minister of Foreign Affairs. It is possible for your delegation in Vienna to submit any missing notifications during the special treaty event.

Further information and model 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 publications are also available on the United Nations Treaty Section's website (<http://treaties.un.org>).

Information on the status of treaties deposited with the Secretary-General may be obtained from the above-mentioned website. Notifications made by other States are also available on the status page of the website for each treaty.

The Secretary-General in his letter emphasized the need not only to undertake treaty actions but also to give internal effect to the relevant treaty obligations. In this connection, I draw your attention to the website containing information on legal technical assistance available within the United Nations system (see <http://www.un.org/law/technical/technical.htm>). Also, on 21 and 22 April 2009, the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs will conduct a seminar at Headquarters in New York on treaty law and practice, which is customized to meet the needs of Government officials in relation to the participation in treaties deposited with the Secretary-General (including signatures, full powers, deposit of instruments, reservations) and the registration of treaties. I encourage you to participate in this practical training seminar.

Advice before **1 April 2009** on your Government's intention to deposit instruments and/or notifications to any of the highlighted multilateral treaties would assist us in making the necessary arrangements. 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; or e-mail: holbrook@un.org; rosenboom@un.org).

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patricia O'Brien'.

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