



Office of the United Nations  
Resident Coordinator  
联合国机构协调处

Date: 28 April 2003

To: All UN Staff in China

From: Kerstin Leitner   
Resident Coordinator

Subject: **Second Advisory Note on SARS in China**

Following the Advisory Note on SARS issued on 9 April, 2003, which announced a number of precautionary measures, all of which remain valid, the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) would like to provide all staff with additional guidance and propose additional measures to be followed by all UN Agencies and in particular UN staff in China in recent developments related to the SARS situation.

***Precautionary Measures introduced by the Local and Central Authorities***

In order to prevent the further spread of the SARS virus throughout China and, in particular, in Beijing, the central government and the Beijing Municipality have recently introduced wide ranging precautionary measures (see Annex I for a non exhaustive list ).

In addition, the following precautionary measures have been recommended by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) for Diplomatic Missions (see Annex II).

We ask all international and national staff to be observant of these measures, and to kindly report to their supervisors in case they encounter any difficulties with these measures.

***Temporary measures applicable to UN Staff in China under current travel restrictions***

In view of the fact that normal operations are slowing down at this point until the above national and international travel restrictions are lifted, the following new measures shall be adopted from now till 19 May, 2003, when they will be reviewed and revised as appropriate:

- Flexible working hours to allow staff to avoid rush hour traffic on their way to/from the office; agencies which re-introduce staff transportation during this period need to charge for such transportation; core working hours where everybody is expected to be present at work are 9.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.;

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- In-country travel is suspended, except for unavoidable cases which will be authorized by the head of the office or his/her designated representative;
- Advanced maternity leave shall be granted to staff or their wife who are pregnant;
- Advanced home leave or annual leave shall be granted to staff upon request who have health conditions, which may require regular medical care and treatment;
- For the families of international staff a request for voluntary evacuation until 22 May will be granted upon request;
- National staff whose children are out of school may be granted annual leave between now and the end of school vacations in due consultation with their supervisors;
- Staff who wish to work from home shall discuss work arrangements with their supervisors;
- N-95 masks will be distributed and are available from the UNDP office, upon request.

All staff members are advised to follow the government's travel advisory during the May Day holiday season and refrain from traveling to areas outside of Beijing for the time being.

Regarding the possible medical evacuation of a staff member infected by SARS, the International SOS has now the medical and operational capability to conduct medical evacuations for suspected or confirmed SARS patients. According to SOS, the Chinese health authorities have indicated that they will allow the departure of a SARS patient. We have so far identified the Narita Airport Red Cross Hospital in Japan as a possible receiving hospital for such medical evacuations. Of course, we all hope that such cases will not arise. Furthermore we have information that todate the three hospitals designated in Beijing to handle cases from foreign missions can provide required medical services.

The UNCT will continue to monitor very closely the situation related to SARS and the staff will be advised of any further changes and measures to be taken on a regular basis. Daily information updates are available at [www.chinadaily.com/en](http://www.chinadaily.com/en) (in English) and [www.sohu.com](http://www.sohu.com) (in Chinese).

Best regards.

## Annex I

- All primary and secondary schools are closed for two weeks till 7 May;
- The general public is advised to refrain from attending large gathering, going to crowded places and traveling outside Beijing;
- The May holiday is reduced to three working days starting from 1 May to 5 May during which people are advised to minimize their travel activities;
- Non-essential seminars, workshops and public events between now and the end of June have been cancelled and/or postponed;
- Non-essential meetings and gatherings should be avoided;
- Non-essential overseas travels by Chinese officials are either postponed or cancelled;
- Passengers at the Beijing airport, and at bus and train stations are being screened for fever and other related SARS symptoms;
- All public transports (airplane, train, bus and taxis) and ports/stations are disinfected regularly;
- All government agencies/institutions are required to report suspected SARS cases among staff and their family members immediately, and direct contact persons are asked to follow quarantine procedures;
- A number of buildings in Beijing have been quarantined after a case or cases has been reported in order to monitor possible further infections among residents.

## Annex II

- Be on high alert. Once fever, cough or other symptoms similar to respiratory disease occur, it is essential, to go immediately to a designated hospital for treatment or dial an emergency hotline for consultation, so as to ensure early diagnosis and report of cases as well as prompt isolation and treatment of patients (*as for contact numbers, please see Annex: Access to Medical Services from MOFA*);
- To diminish the chances to contract SARS, it is advisable to limit the number of meetings and other social activities for the time being as appropriate. Minimize your presence at department stores, theaters, markets, restaurants, pubs and other public places where there is a high density of people. Better use vehicles of diplomatic missions instead of public transport, and better wear masks when going to crowded public places.
- Have balanced diet, appropriate exercises and adequate rest, relax and refrain from smoking, so as to enhance physical resistance. Keep warm against cold as the weather changes. Better use personal cleaning kits and bring medicines when going out and staying at hotels.
- Clean and disinfect vehicles, premises, office facilities and articles of daily use. Ensure good ventilation at working and living places.
- Once there are suspected or confirmed SARS cases in the diplomatic corps, notify the Diplomatic Service Bureau/Housing Department and the relevant department of MOFA promptly.