

attn : major Srebrenica  
president  
ministry of defense representative

TO RENARD TOUKERT  
FM PIERRE SALIGNON

from : Pascal VIGNIER  
Country coordinator  
MSF

8 pages

24.04.95

object : information  
meeting request

Dear Sir,

Regarding the ongoing situation in Srebrenica between MSF and the authorities, I would like to bring to your attention the following informations :

After my visit in Srebrenica, last April 6th to 8th, I have understood the difficulties you face to link the mobilization order with our internal rules and constraints.

In a view to enlarge the ways of compromise, I went to Sarajevo to meet with the minister of Defense.

There I learned that a protocol between Government of BiH and MSF is expected by the Ministry of Defense. Up to now, such document didn't exist, national staff regulation remaining to be clarify.

During the discussion, we explained that we fully agree to sign such a staff regulation guide line, but bearing in mind the nature of our activities, field constraints, and independance and neutrality rules.

The terms of such an agreement will be discussed in Sarajevo between MSF and The BiH government before the end of April, we agreed.

In the same time, Ministry of Defense agreed to postpoined all mobilization procedures untill the signature of the protocol.

From Zenica to Tuzla, postpoining order has been transmitted and applied by the in charge authorities.

The ministry confirmed that a similar order has been brought to your attention since Monday April 10th, without any further effect on the MSF staff condition.

Minister of Defense also recognized the well founded of some views we discussed about during our meeting such as :

The little pool of multiqualified persons able to replace our existing team in the srebrenica area, which request to keep most of our staff. more or less 3 days a week.

The impossibility for us to accept recruitment run by a governmental authority, as we are accepted and welcome in BiH precisely because of our neutrality.

The open door to part time job solutions between civil defense duties and MSF ones as well.

For all of these reasons, we feel encouraged by the Ministry of Defense to emphasize our views.

Also, the discussion shows that interests of each others can be protected on a smooth but official way.

That's the reason why we don't understand why procedures, policies and constructive discussions are shared all over BiH, including Gorazde, but not in Srebrenica as well.

For instance two of the MSF volunteers are already drafted.

Logistician assistant : 31 years old, ingenior

In charge of fuel distribution, warehouse keeping and monitoring, computer and various equipment maintenance, logistic forecasts, mechanic workshop monitoring.

Logistician assistant : 49 years old, architect

In charge of rehabilitation : planning, mapping, follow up, team management, reporting, also in charge of building material supplies on local market.

Practically, the confusing situation I exposed and the ongoing drafting of our staff obliged us to cancel some of our activities, due to lack of logistic support.

-réhabilitation program

-hospital maintenance

-all activities not depending on pharmacy, as the main warehouse has no more storekeeper. 12 ambulants are out of hygien products, 6 of them are more or less unaccessible as one of our vehicle is broken, and nobody for repairs.

The doctors have, in addition of their medical duties, to fill and maintain the hospital generator, as the vehicles as well.

Another turn table has to be urgently set up, to discuss these differences between ministry and opstina views and policies, expecting that the highest authority propositions could be used as an arbitration in further discussions.

Unable to render some of the essential help to the population, I estimate that the situation cannot stand to that point without durable consequences on our general relief operation.

Believing in a common volonte to bring up all the necessary conditions to restart our programs, we keep on expecting a positive answer for an open discussion.

Best regards