



Dalhousie University

International Ocean  
Institute



**FAXED**

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

To: H.E. Minister Jan Pronk  
FAX No: 31 70 348 64 36

From: Elisabeth Mann Borgese  
FAX No.: 1 902 868 2455

Date: September 16, 1994

My dear Jan,

This is a multi-purpose letter, dealing with various, interrelated matters.

First of all let me congratulate you and the world on your reappointment as Minister for Development Cooperation. Under your leadership, the Netherlands has become Number One in development cooperation. as no one understands the concept better than you do!

Now to move from big things to smaller things: I know of course that it is impossible for you to come to Madras, although this is very sad, particularly because we will have the first, organisational meeting of the **World Commission** for the Oceans, immediately following Pacem in Maribus.

So let me first bring you up to date on that.

As you know, the Law of the Sea Convention is coming into force on November 16. It is already showing signs of severe erosion. We are not living in the best of times. The oceans, and the Law of the Sea need a watchdog now, and so we have launched the idea of an Independent World Commission for the Seas and Oceans. The response has been phenomenal. It seems, everybody feels that such a Commission is indeed needed. Mario Soares has indicated that he is ready to be the Chairman of the Commission, and we have acceptances from Bedjaoui, Fleischhauer and Koroma; Federico Mayor; Gus Speth; Klaus Töpfer, and Robert Muller. Of course we need you on this Commission, in your personal capacity. The members of our Board are all included ex officio. So we have already more than a nucleus of first-rate people. Layashi and I are going to meet next week in New York to balance and finalise the list. We want to announce the establishment of the Commission on

November 16. This is symbolically very important.

So if you could come even just for one day to Madras, for this initial meeting (December 9) -- or two days: for the closing of Pacem in Maribus and for this meeting --that would be quite wonderful.

On the other hand, we will of course understand if it is not possible.

In this second case, could you send a statement to Pacem in Maribus? December 4-8). Jan van Ettinger might bring it and present it? Jan is no longer on our Council (his own wish) but he still is quite interested in what we are doing, and I think he has had a difficult year, between family health problems and professional problems, and if we could have a good reason to bring him to Madras, I would love to do it.

I shall send you the final paper for the World Commission next week, after we have finalized it with Layashi.

The budget for the first year is just about one million dollars. We have already been assured that there will be UNDP support --I hope to the tune of \$100,000. I am fairly confident that Töpfer will come through with about \$300,000 --his being the figure I mentioned to his Administrative Assistant, and it did not deter him from enthusiastically joining the Commission! --and there should be a contribution from Portugal.

Do you think your Ministry might make a contribution? The work, certainly, contains much that deals with development cooperation: starting with an analysis of the benefits that developing countries can draw from the new ocean regime, and ending with a study of the interactions between law of the sea developments and the Secretary-General's Development Agenda.

The IOI will act as Secretariat for the Commission. Our 8 operational Centres will conduct regional hearings. The funds should go, not to the IOI but into a special Trust Fund administered by the Treasurer of the Commission.

All the very best.

Yours as ever

*E. E. E.*





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FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

To: H.E. Minister Jan Pronk

FAX No: 31 70 348 64 36

From: Elisabeth Mann Borgese

FAX No.: 1 902 868 2455

Date: September 25, 1994

My dear Jan,

This to follow up on last week's fax.

Layashi and I met in New York. The changes in the World Commission we made were quite insignificant. There may be some more changes when we meet with Mario Soares in Malta on October 9. In any case, I am attaching the document.

Otherwise, nothing new. Gus Speth has reconfirmed most definitely the UNDP financial contribution, and his personal participation in the Commission.

After our meeting in Malta, I will nail down the contribution by the Government of Germany. Layashi encourages me to appeal again to your generosity and cooperation. We fervently hope it will be possible for you to make a substantial contribution to the work of the Commission. As I explained in my last fax, this need not go to the IOI, but to a trust fund to be administered by the Treasurer of the Commission.

Layashi indicated that it might not be possible for you to become a member of the Commission. If this were to be the case (I personally would feel sad about it!) we would be most grateful if you could suggest a replacement and if you could explain the whole project to the person of your choice and convince him/her to accept!

Our schedule remains unchanged: We want to announce the establishment of the Commission on November 16.

All the very best,

Yours as ever,



Dalhousie University

International Ocean  
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FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

To: The Hon. Jan Pronk  
Minister for Development Cooperation  
FAX No: 31 70 348 64 36

From: Elisabeth Mann Borgese  
FAX No.: 1 902 868 2455

Date: November 8, 1994

Subject: World Commission for the Oceans

My dear Jan,

Layashi Yaker asked me to send you the up-to-date version of the proposal for the establishment of the World Commission for the Oceans. I am attaching it herewith.

We are delighted that Mr. Lubbers will accept to be a member of the Commission.

At the same time I would like to apply, on behalf of the Commission, for a financial contribution from your Ministry.

The total budget for the Commission's work is indicated in the attached document. I should add the following comment:

- . UNDP is taking care of the item "Hearings," at least in part. I expect an official confirmation for \$120,000 which will cover the hearings to be organised by our 4 GEF sponsored Centres (India, Fiji, Senegal, and Costa Rica). Japan will finance its own hearings; Canada will finance its own hearings; we are applying to the Sasakawa Foundation to cover the costs of the hearings in China.
- . The first meeting of Vice Presidents will take place in Lisbon. It will be funded by Portugal.
- . The first Plenary Session of the Commission will take place in Portugal. It will be funded by Portugal.
- . The second meeting of Vice Presidents will take place in



Malta. It will be funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta.

The second Plenary Session of the Commission will take place in Japan. It will be funded by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

We have been encouraged to apply to the Ministry of the Environment of Germany for a grant of \$300,000.

To sum it up, this means that over \$1 million appear to be well assured. Priority items which are not yet assured are: salary for a first-rate full-time Coordinator for the Commission, and fee for a first-rate Editor-in-Chief for the actual writing of the Report; as well as funding for the research.


We should like to apply to your Ministry for a contribution of \$300,000 for the first year. If the grant could be repeated during the second year, that would completely cover items 5 and 6.

As pointed out in the document, these funds would go into a special Trust Fund, to be established by the Commission and administered under the responsibility of a Treasurer, appointed by the Commission.

If you need any further information, we are of course at your disposal.

We thank you most fervently for all your help and advice.

Yours as ever,



Elisabeth Mann Borgese  
Chair, IOI

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Hague

RECEIVED FEB 02 1995

To:  
Ms. E. Mann Borgese  
International Ocean Institute  
Dalhousie University  
1226 Le Marchant Street  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
CANADA B3H 3P7

*Date*  
23 januari 1995

*Reference*  
DIO/JS-2474

*Subject*  
Subsidy request World Commission for the Oceans

*Department*  
DIO/JS

Thank you for your letters of 25 September and 8 November 1994. I support the establishment of a commission with sufficient authority worldwide to draw attention to the importance of sustainable ocean development and the law of the sea.

As I indicated earlier I intend to respond positively to your request for a financial contribution. I hope to be able to indicate an exact amount in the near future. The level of the Netherlands contribution, among other things, depends on the confirmed commitments of other contributors. I would also like to suggest that efforts are made to acquire commitments of a wide range of countries which are representative of the various regions of the world. This would certainly enhance the commission's stature and authority.

I look forward to receiving this information. After receiving such information, and after the establishment of the Trust Fund by the Commission, I will inform you about the Netherlands contribution.

THE MINISTER FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION,

  
J.P. Pronk



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FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

→ To: H.E. Minister Jan Pronk  
Fax: 0031 70 348 6436

From: Elisabeth Mann Borgese  
Fax: 1 902 868 2455

Date: March 12, 1998

Subject: World Commission

Personal

and

Confidential

*My dear Jan,*

Our office in Malta got a call from your office, inquiring why I had sent you a copy of my letter of resignation from the World Commission. I m sure Dr. Saigal has given the correct information, but I would like to add just a few personal words.

You had done so much for this Commission. Without your help and cooperation it could not have come into existence. I know how much importance you give to its success and this is why I felt the need to explain to you the reason for my resignation.

It was a decision that was very hard for me to take, but it had to be taken.

As you remember, the initiative to establish this Commission was mine, and all the preparations for its establishment -- defining its mandate and mission, raising the initial funding, getting the initial support and cooperation, selecting President Soares as Chairman and convincing him to accept (which was *difficult!!!*) -- all this was done by Layashi Yaker, Krishan Saigal and myself. We thought we had laid the foundation for excellent cooperation between the Commission and the IOI.

But as soon as the Portuguese had taken over, things began to run afoul. As a matter of fact, our excellent Krishan Saigal was personally offended and

humiliated in Portugal; and some one whom I do not want to mention by name, in Portugal, started a campaign of slander against the IOI. It was alleged that our Operational Centres did not function, that we had misappropriated GEF funds, and other such lies, which did not survive for long because there evidently was not a shred of truth in them.

In Tokyo, President Soares appointed a Secretary-General -- he appointed Layashi on the basis of my strong recommendation -- with a well defined mandate, and he appointed a "Coordinator," with an undefined mandate. This was a prescription for failure, and I pointed it out, in public, in Tokyo. It made Layashi's work totally impossible since all decisions were made by the "Coordinator" in Lisbon. I think in fact that a lot of bad decisions were made: at the political level: for instance, the choice of Patrick Kennedy as Vice Chairman was obviously a very poor choice which, among other things, cost the Commission a lot of money; the selection of 35 paid consultants, *all from the "North"!!* -- was based on a series of wrong choices and took the Commission's work in a wrong direction. I repeatedly pointed out that documents reflected the views of the North and that there was nothing in them for the South. A number of things were in fact corrected in the course of the last two years. But, until the Cape Town session, the output was unacceptably poor as well politically unacceptable. Then a very brave effort was mounted to change course, and I must say I admired Jan van Ettinger for his decisive and positive attitude. We simply cannot fail. We must succeed. We simply have no choice. Failure is to be excluded. That is what he stood for. In fact, many improvements were made, and I also did my best to help in this process. But I am afraid it is impossible to make a very good report out of a very bad one, in the end.

But things went very wrong also at the administrative and procedural level. There was no transparency on financial matters. Funds raised for awareness-raising and regional inputs were not spent for these purposes. The "Coordinator," in fact, does not believe in regional consultations and said so in public.

There are quite a few other things I should mention, but I do not want to bore you.

The way Layashi was got rid of was only the last straw.

I do not think what was in question are his merits or demerits. You have known



him for a long time; so have I, and we all know that nobody is perfect. What is in question is the way he was treated. A decision as important as the removal of the Secretary-General cannot be made without any involvement whatsoever of the Commission as a whole or, at least, the Executive Committee. No one was aware of anything whatsoever. To me that is proof -- if any were needed -- that this organisation does not work properly; that it is run by a small internal clique, not capable of producing what ought to have been produced and pursuing their own agenda.

Believe me, dear Jan; I am not a quitter and to give up on this one is still causing me sleepless nights. I also have received very kind letters and phone calls from colleagues urging me to stay. But I can't.

This letter is confidential and addressed only to you. But I am asking my office to send you President Soares' answer to my letter of resignation as well as my reply to him

Thanks for your understanding.

With all good wishes,

Yours as ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'E. G. W. M.', is written below the typed text.

Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken

Neda

RECEIVED AUG 05 1998

To Mrs. Elisabeth Mann Borgese,  
Founder and Honorary Chair  
International Ocean Institute  
Dalhousie University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
Canada

Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
United Nations Department  
Bezuidenhoutseweg 67  
P.O. Box 20061  
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*Date* 22 July 1998  
*Our Ref.* 98/CI/104  
*Page* 1/2  
*Encl.*  
*Re.* Your facsimile June 6, 1998

*Contact* P.J. Bierma  
*Tel.* +31 70 3485067  
*Fax* +31 70 3486167  
*E-mail* Bierma@dvn.minbuza.nl

It was good to receive your letter and note on The Oceanic Circle. I found it full of inspiration.

I agree with you that the present opportunity for meaningful discussion on the closely interrelated problems of ocean space should not be wasted. For that reason the Netherlands takes special interest in an informal contactgroup set up by Portugal.

The Report of IWCO that will be issued shortly, will certainly have an impact on the traditional resolution on the Oceans.

Nevertheless a tedious process in New York lays ahead to negotiate on the more contentious issues which the IWCO-Report will contain. A common effort seems to be called for in the informal consultations to reach consensus. Be assured that the Netherlands Government will play its part in those consultations in the right spirit.





As for a gremium to monitor system-wide initiatives, I am thinking of the CSD.  
For the moment regional structures appear to me the best intermediary to foster  
concrete cooperation between nations.

J.P. Pronk



Minister for Development Cooperation