FAXMESSAGE

To: MSF Amsterdam, Pim and Marlieke
Fm: MSF Bangkok, Jules
Date: 06 June 1997
31 20 6205170

Number of pages (including this one): 12 + 1

Goodmorning,

With this fax I send you the final and signed version of the MOU and the draft version of the proposal / short mission report. The latter report is a joint venture of the three members of the MSF team in Pyongyang. I suggest you fax both documents to Brussels and Paris. It’s up to Marie-Pierre and Martine to finalize the proposal (esp. The objectives and activity part).

I really think it would be better for MSF to finance the first month out of own funds. The most important reason is that we agreed this with the Government. It’s specifically stated in the MOU. Besides this, humanitarian aid in the DPRK, is highly political and donors are trying to influence organisations to lower down their standards. IFRC and UNICEF simply state that their aid is ‘political’. It is important for MSF to be independent, especially the first month of trial and error. Don’t forget that the Government is a smart one. If we do not stick to the letter of the MOU what we all agreed to, we give them the opportunity to do the same. The UNESCO delegation in Paris has had contact with ECHO before. Later on I am sure many donors are willing to give generously for the DPRK.

Furthermore:

Keep your faxmessages and phonecalls to Pyongyang strictly to the point, no jokes and no referrals to money if not really necessary: no budget proposals, no donor correspondence. Also avoid the impression that there might be a difference of opinion on MSF European level (which never happens of course). Never write North Korea as the address. We’re working in Korea or the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK).

For future teammembers during the second phase:

We are not looking for the MSF emergency rush-rush staff with T-shirt and jeans (slight caricature, sorry). We need experienced, 30+ diplomats with public health experience and/or experience in another field who are willing to wear shirt and tie if necessary. MSF staff cannot be really operational, we’re in Korea in an advisory role. MSF Doctors cannot be involved in direct patient care. This may, of course, change in the future after we’ve build up conficence. Then MSF doctors may very well be involved in direct patient care, based on mutual trust between the colleagues. At the moment the Koreans are extremely sensitive about the point. The word “Training” should be avoided for example, it is better to use “exchange of information” between colleagues. It’s better to recruit doctors, nurses are not too high on the social ladder. I know it is a bit complicated and it may sound a bit over the top for you, but it is reality. If MSF
wants to stay in Korea we have to play the game. English seems to be better understood than French or any other world language.

I propose a debriefing/planning session in Paris coming Tuesday somewhere. Would that be convenient? Please be informed that the Korean Government informed me that they want me to come back on 26 June to discuss the second phase of the MSF operation. They insist on doing business with somebody they know. I have no objection to going back.

Please inform Margot/Wilna/Geoff that I will be flying home tonite with KLM. Back in the office on Monday.

Greetings,

Jules.