

The Secretary of State presents her compliments to Their Excellencies and Messieurs and Mesdames the Chiefs of International Organizations designated under the International Organizations Immunities Act (IOIA) and has the honor to draw to their attention an issue of importance to the United States Government; that is, full compliance by employees of international organizations with court-ordered child and spouse support payments.

It is recognized and generally accepted that international organizations need privileges and immunities in order to carry out their functions. The United States Government believes, however, that it is highly inappropriate for international organizations to allow their privileges and immunities to be used by employees of the organizations to avoid meeting their court-ordered obligations to divorced spouses and dependent children. Recent cases drawn to the attention of the Department of State indicate that the practices and policies of some international organizations are not effective in ensuring prompt compliance with court orders in family separations and divorce proceedings involving employees of the organizations.

The Secretary of State requests that steps be taken promptly to ensure that all international organizations designated under the IOIA voluntarily provide court-ordered

or subpoenaed information required to determine the salary and benefits of an employee involved in divorce and family law proceedings, and that all international organizations voluntarily take steps to enforce court-ordered payments to divorced spouses and dependent children. Moreover, the Secretary of State requests that the international organizations undertake to ensure that the international organizations' policies and practices in this regard are transparent and readily available to employees and spouses who may be engaged in family separation and divorce proceedings.

The Secretary of State commends those international organizations which have already taken steps to establish such practices and policies, and encourages others to do so as soon as possible. Otherwise, the perception that immunities are being used to avoid just financial obligations is likely to lead to the imposition of non-voluntary remedies which may result in either a diminution of privileges and immunities under the IOIA or protracted litigation, neither of which is in the best interest of the international organizations community.

The United States Government is considering various means to address this problem. To enable the Department of State to represent accurately to other entities of the United States Government the international organizations' policies and practices with respect to court-ordered child and spouse support, as well as the measures taken to inform

employees and spouses of these practices and policies, the chiefs of the international organizations are also requested to provide the Department of State with the most current information available about their organization on this subject. Additionally, the organizations are requested to inform the Department of State of the name and title of the person charged with the responsibility for developing and implementing such policies and practices so that the Department of State may consult further as needed. Replies should be forwarded by August 1 through the U.S. representative to the international organization, or, in the absence of a U.S. representative or mission, directly to the attention of Ms. Kaye Boesel, International Organizations Bureau, Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520-6334.

Department of State,

Washington,

