United Nations ST/IC/2005/25

Secretariat

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Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **Education grant and special education grant for children with a disability**

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* The present circular will be in effect until further notice.

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I. General provisions

1. The purpose of the present circular is to inform staff members eligible to receive the education grant or the special education grant for children with a disability under administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2 of the procedures applicable to the submission and processing of their claims.

2. For ease of reference, the eligibility requirements and conditions of entitlement contained in staff rule 103.20 (a)-(l), in staff rule 203.8 (a)-(k) and in sections 1.2 and 2 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2 are reproduced in annex I. Certain non-admissible expenses are set out in annex II**.** The monetary amounts of maximum educational expenses and maximum entitlements are set out in annex III. The forms required to submit a claim related to the education grant are contained in annex IV.

II. Requests for education grant advances

3. Under section 6 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2, staff members who are entitled to the education grant and who are required to pay all or a portion of the school fees at the beginning of the school year may apply for an advance against their entitlement. They should do so by completing form P.45 (Request for payment of education grant and/or advance against education grant) (see annex IV to the present circular).

4. When an advance is being requested for the first time for a child, the request must be accompanied by invoices or other official documentation from the educational institution attesting to the school fees, including enrolment, tuition, full board, if applicable, and any scholarship, bursary or similar grant. No advance shall be payable with respect to the flat sum for board. The amount of the advance will be 100 per cent of the anticipated amount of the education grant on the basis of the information provided by the educational institution.

5. For a subsequent school year, the advance will normally be 100 per cent of the amount paid for the previous year. However, if lower admissible educational expenses are anticipated, the staff member should so indicate. In such a case, the amount of the advance will be 100 per cent of the grant calculated on the basis of the revised expenses. If higher admissible educational expenses are anticipated, the staff member may request an advance on the basis of the higher expenses. As in the case of a first advance, official documentation will be required from the educational institution attesting to the increased expenses.

6. After the advance is requested, and if the anticipated admissible educational expenses on which the advance was based become higher, the staff member may request an adjustment as soon as he or she has been informed of the higher charges. Should the anticipated admissible educational expenses become lower, it is incumbent on the staff member by virtue of staff regulation 1.2 (b) to report that fact promptly so that the amount of the advance may be adjusted and any excess payment recovered.

7. When there is no claim for the previous school year, requests for an advance may be submitted prior to or within four months after the beginning of the school

year. The request must be accompanied by invoices or other official documentation from the educational institution attesting to the school fees.

8. When there is a claim for the previous school year, the request for the advance should be presented in part IV of form P.45 together with form P.41 (Certificate of attendance and costs and receipt for payments) in respect of the claim for the previous year (part III of form P.45).

9. Advances will be paid approximately one month prior to the beginning of the school year for staff on the Headquarters payroll, provided the relevant information is received at least two months prior to the beginning of the school year. At duty stations where circumstances so warrant, special arrangements may be established by the Secretary-General for payment of the advance in instalments.

10. If the advance is not cleared by settlement of the relevant education grant claim for the previous year, it will be recovered from the staff member's salary in accordance with section 6.2 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2. Any advance will be considered as due from the staff member until it is either discharged by certification of the entitlement or recovered from the staff member's salary. Recovery from staff members will take place automatically three months after the end of the academic year for Headquarters staff and four months after the end of the academic year for field staff. Similar arrangements will be made for staff members who are not on the Headquarters payroll. For staff members who are separating from service, recovery will take place on separation.

11. No advance will be authorized for subsequent school years until previous education grant advances have been cleared by settlement of the relevant education grant claim or repayment of the advance previously authorized.

12. Advances are normally payable in United States dollars at all duty stations except Geneva. For staff members whose duty station is Geneva and whose school fees are in Swiss francs, the advance will be payable in Swiss francs, as is the practice for emoluments. For those Geneva staff members whose school fees are in a currency other than Swiss francs, the advance will be payable in United States dollars. In all cases, the advance will be recorded in United States dollars, except when educational expenses are incurred in one of the other currencies in which the education grant is expressed in appendix G to the 100 series of the Staff Rules and appendix III to the 200 series of the Staff Rules. In such cases, the advance will be recorded in the currency in which the educational expenses are incurred, using the United Nations operational rate of exchange in effect on the date of payment of the advance. Annex III to the present circular sets out the table that provides education grant entitlements expressed in different currencies. The amounts indicated are effective as from the school year in progress on 1 January 2005.

III. Claims for payment of education grant

13. Claims for payment of the education grant should be submitted on form P.45. Claims should be submitted promptly upon completion of the school year or, if the staff member separates from service earlier, shortly before the date of separation from service. If the child's attendance ceases before completion of the school year, the staff member should submit the claim within one month of cessation of the child's school attendance.

14. Late claims are subject to staff rules 103.15 (ii) and 212.5 and will be paid only if they are submitted within one year following the date on which the staff member would have been entitled to the payment of the grant.

15. The claim must be accompanied by written evidence of the child's attendance, education costs and the specific amounts paid by the staff member. Such evidence will normally be submitted on form P.41, which should be certified by the school. The same form is required where only the flat sum for board and the fixed rate for books are claimed. To avoid the prorating of grants relating to the flat sum for board or the fixed rate for textbooks, the certification date on the form should be no more than 10 days before the last day of attendance. The staff member should request the school to retain a copy of form P.41.

16. When it is not possible to submit form P.41, the staff member should submit a certificate of school attendance (form P.41/B) indicating the exact dates on which the school year began and ended and the dates of the child's attendance, together with receipted school bills, itemizing the various charges paid to the school, documentary proof of payment, including invoices, receipts or cancelled cheques and any other substantiating information requested in form P.41. These documents should be certified by a responsible official of the educational institution on its official stationery or on paper bearing its seal.

17. Neither form P.41 certified by the school nor the certificate of attendance should be changed in any way. Any revision or alteration may be cause for disciplinary action.

18. Expenditures that are not paid to the school and cannot therefore be certified on form P.41 by the school as having been paid may be claimed by attaching to form P.45 an explanation of the nature of the expenditure and substantiating original documentation (for example, invoices, receipts or cancelled cheques). If the certificate, other documentation and accompanying receipts are not in one of the working languages of the United Nations, a translation into one of those languages must be attached.

19. If the staff member does not have custody of his or her child, the staff member will be required to submit documentary proof, in the form of invoices, receipts or cancelled cheques, that the flat sums for board and textbooks have been used for the purposes intended.

A. Admissible expenses

20. Admissible expenses are determined on the basis of the criteria contained in section 3 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2. Expenses for full-time school attendance admissible under section 3.1 of the instruction are those that are paid directly to the school or are certified by the school as being necessary for school attendance.

B. Boarding expenses

21. Boarding expenses are admissible under section 3.2 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2:

(a) When a child attends an education institution outside the “duty station”, as defined by staff rules 103.20 (a) (iv) and 203.8 (a) (iv);

(b) When a child attends an educational institution beyond commuting distance from the area where the staff member is serving and, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, no school in the area would be suitable for the child.

22. When a staff member is assigned to a special mission where a mission subsistence allowance is payable, no boarding expenses or flat sum for board is provided for in respect of a child attending an educational institution at the parent duty station.

23. For ease of reference, the rules governing entitlements relating to school attendance and boarding expenses contained in appendix G to the 100 series of the Staff Rules and in appendix III to the 200 series of the Staff Rules are set out below. The table reproduced in annex III to the present circular sets out the applicable monetary amounts for the school year in progress on 1 January 2005 with respect to:

(a) Maximum admissible educational expenses and maximum grant for disabled children (column 1);

(b) Maximum education grant (column 2);

(c) Normal flat rate when boarding is not provided (column 3);

(d) Additional flat rate for boarding (at designated duty stations) (column 4). This applies to boarding at educational institutions below the post-secondary level;

(e) Maximum grant for staff members serving at designated duty stations (column 5);

(f) Maximum admissible education expenses (attendance only) (column 6). This applies to expenses incurred outside the duty station.

24. Entitlements applicable to education expenses incurred in relation to an exchange or sponsor programme outside the country of the student’s parent university should be calculated based on the maximum admissible expenses applicable to the currency of the country of the parent university, if the following conditions are met:

(a) The student normally attends the parent university;

(b) The exchange or sponsor programme is an accepted part of the studies at the parent university;

(c) The exchange or sponsor programme is clearly of a temporary nature and does not represent a whole curriculum abroad to obtain a degree; and

(d) The educational expenses are billed by the parent university in the currency of the country of the parent university.

If the above conditions are not met, the maximum admissible expenses is determined by reference to the currency of the country in which the exchange or sponsor programme is undertaken.

Attendance at an educational institution outside the duty station

25. Where the educational institution provides board, 75 per cent of the allowable costs of attendance and of the costs of board is payable, up to the maximum

admissible educational expenses per year indicated in column (1) of the table, with a maximum grant per year indicated in column (2).

26. Where the educational institution does not provide board, a flat sum indicated in column (3) of the table plus 75 per cent of the allowable costs of attendance indicated in column (6) are payable, up to a maximum grant per year indicated in column (2).

Attendance at an educational institution at the duty station

27. Seventy-five per cent of the allowable costs of attendance per year is payable, up to the maximum indicated in column (1) of the table, with a maximum grant as indicated in column (2).

28. Where the educational institution is located beyond commuting distance from the area where the staff member is serving and, in the opinion of the Secretary-General, no school in that area would be suitable for the child, the amount of the grant is calculated at the same rates as specified in paragraphs 25 and 26 above.

Attendance at an educational institution at the primary or secondary level outside the duty station when staff serve at designated duty stations with inadequate or no educational facilities

29. Where the educational institution provides board:

(a) One hundred per cent of the costs of board is payable, up to the maximum indicated in column (4) of the table; and

(b) Seventy-five per cent of the allowable costs of attendance and of any part of the costs of board in excess of the amount indicated in column (4) are payable, with a maximum reimbursable amount as indicated in column (5).

30. Where the educational institution does not provide board:

(a) A flat sum for board is payable, as indicated in column (4) of the table; and

(b) Seventy-five per cent of the allowable costs of attendance indicated in column (1) of the table is payable, with a maximum reimbursable amount as indicated in column (5).

C. Textbook expenses

31. Expenses for textbooks are admissible and will be paid in accordance with the provisions of sections 3.3 and 4.4 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2. To that effect, staff members are required to obtain from the educational institution a certification on form P.41 that the textbooks have not been provided free of charge.

32. Admissible expenses for textbooks shall be reimbursed up to a maximum of 75 per cent of the following fixed rates:

(a) $210 for a child at the primary level;

(b) $420 for a child at the secondary level;

(c) $840 for a child at the post-secondary level.

No additional supporting evidence is required if the staff member claims the reimbursement for textbooks at or below the fixed rate.

33. When it is not possible to submit form P.41, textbook expenses may be claimed upon certification by the staff member in form P.45 that the textbooks were not provided free of charge. In those cases, the staff member is required to retain a list of prescribed textbooks and receipts documenting their purchase, in accordance with section 9.2 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2, so that they may be produced for review, audit or investigation.

D. Expenses for private tuition in the mother tongue

34. Expenses for private tuition in the mother tongue are admissible when all the conditions of section 3.4 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2 are met, namely:

(a) Private tuition is given by a qualified teacher who is certified in the language of instruction and is not a member of the staff member's family;

(b) The staff member serves in a country whose language is not his or her mother tongue;

(c) The child attends a local school in which the language of instruction is not the staff member's mother tongue.

35. A request for reimbursement for tuition in the mother tongue must be accompanied by:

(a) A certificate of tuition in the mother tongue (form P.41/A, "Certificate of tuition in the mother tongue"), certified by the educational institution or tutor. A certified copy of the form should be retained by the educational institution or tutor;

(b) Evidence to sufficiently document payments actually made, such as original cancelled cheques, copies of original cheques accompanied by bank statements to verify the payments made to the tutor or to the educational institution, money order receipts or bank transfer receipts accompanied by an explanatory affidavit. It should be noted that receipts or other written confirmation of cash payments are not acceptable as proof of payment;

(c) Certificate of full-time school attendance (form P.41, "Certificate of attendance and costs and receipt for payments", or form P.41/B, "Certificate of school attendance");

(d) In the case of private tuition, evidence that the tutor is certified in the language of instruction.

E. Non-admissible expenses

36. Section 3.5 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2 lists expenses that are non-admissible because they are neither expenses for full-time school attendance that are paid directly to the school nor are they certified by the school as being necessary for school attendance. Section 3.5 also provides for exceptions allowing certain non-admissible expenses to be considered admissible when a number of conditions are met. For instance, expenses for summer courses are normally non-

admissible, but they may exceptionally be considered admissible as expenses for the prior school year when the summer courses are a prerequisite for further attendance during the regular school year or are required for the school's regular diploma. Other non-admissible expenses include, but are not limited to, those set out in annex II.

F. Scholarship, bursary or similar grant

37. Staff members are required to disclose all scholarships, bursaries or similar grants in a statement attached to form P.45. Financial assistance in the form of scholarship, bursary or similar grant should be certified on form P.41 by the educational institution.

38. As provided in section 3.6 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2, the amount of the scholarship, bursary or similar grant is initially applied towards the non-admissible expenses reflected on form P.41.

39. If the amount of the scholarship, bursary or similar grant does not exceed the non-admissible educational expenses, the education grant is calculated on the basis of the total admissible expenses.

40. If the amount of the scholarship, bursary or similar grant exceeds the non-admissible expenses, the excess amount is deducted from the admissible expenses. The education grant is then calculated on the basis of the remaining admissible expenses.

41. Loan proceeds paid to the educational institution by the staff member should be included in the payments section of form P.41 in order for those payments to be taken into consideration in calculating the entitlement to the education grant.

IV. Death of a staff member after the beginning of the school year

42. In accordance with staff rules 103.20 (g) and 203.8 (f), sections 5.4 and 8.1 (f) of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2 provide that no prorating of the amount of the grant will be required when the staff member dies while in service after the beginning of the school year and the entitlement to education grant travel will continue until the end of the school year and may be authorized for travel between the educational institution and the duty station or another location, subject to the maximum expenses allowed under section 8.1 (d) of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2.

43. As a result:

(a) There will be no prorating or disqualification in respect of any element of the education grant to which the staff member would have been entitled had he or she lived to the end of the school year, including boarding expenses or a flat sum for board and education grant travel;

(b) When processing the separation personnel action form or form P.35, (Personnel payroll clearance action), as applicable, there should be no automatic

recovery which would have resulted from prorating the amount of the grant based on a period of service shorter than the normal school year;

(c) All relevant forms may be completed by the surviving spouse or the legal representative of the child for whom the education grant or education grant travel is paid, or by the child if 18 years of age or older.

V. Travel arrangements and claims

44. Education grant travel should be requested on form P.66, (Request for education grant travel). The conditions for education grant travel are set out in section 8 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2. When the request is approved, a travel authorization will be issued specifying the school year to which the travel is related and the mode, route and dates of travel.

45. Staff members are not allowed to make a direct purchase of the travel tickets without specific prior authorization.

46. If it is not possible for the child to travel to the duty station on education grant travel, either the staff member or his/her spouse may undertake return travel at the expense of the Organization between the duty station and the place of study of one child, subject to the conditions set out in section 8.7 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2. In the case of a staff member with two or more children entitled to education grant travel, both the staff member and his/her spouse may undertake return travel at the expense of the Organization, subject to the same conditions. Pursuant to section 10 of ST/AI/2000/20 regarding official travel, for purposes of education grant travel by air, staff members may opt for a lump-sum payment. Staff members opting for the lump-sum payment should follow the procedures for the exercise of the lump-sum option for travel by air set out in paragraphs 8 to 14 of information circular ST/IC/2001/43.

47. Within two weeks of completion of the child's education grant travel, the staff member must submit a travel claim on form F.10, (Voucher for reimbursement of expenses), to the executive or administrative officer concerned, regardless of whether any claim for reimbursement of the education grant has been made. Submission of form F.10 is required to verify that travel has been undertaken as authorized, as well as for the purpose of certification of the travel expenses for which reimbursement is claimed.

48. Form F.10 should be accompanied by the original travel authorization, ticket stubs and receipts for all expenses for which reimbursement is claimed.

49. If a child exercised education grant travel in a previous school year, no new education grant travel will be authorized before the claim for the prior travel has been approved.

VI. Claims for payment of special education grant

50. Claims for payment of the special education grant should be submitted on form P.45.

51. When the child is not in school attendance, such claims should be submitted annually within one month of the end of the standard school year in the staff member's duty station. When the child is in school attendance, claims should be submitted in accordance with paragraph 13 above. If the staff member separates from service earlier, a claim should be submitted shortly before separation from service.

52. A medical certificate attesting to the disability that gives rise to the claim for payment of the special education grant must accompany the claim. The certifying officer should submit the medical certificate to the Medical Director or designated medical officer who will determine, based on prevailing medical standards, the acceptability of the certificate for the purpose of the special education grant and the date on which the entitlement should be reviewed on medical grounds.

53. The staff member is also required to provide evidence that he or she has exhausted all other sources of benefits that may be available for the education and training of the child, including those that may be obtained from State and local Governments and from the United Nations contributory medical insurance plans. The amount of the expenses used as the basis for the calculation of the special education grant is reduced by the amount of any benefits to which the staff member is entitled.

54. The provisions of the present circular relating to education grant advances, claims for payment of the education grant and travel arrangements should be followed when making those claims under the special education grant entitlement.

VII. Final provisions

55. The present circular supersedes information circulars ST/IC/2002/5 and ST/IC/2005/10 of 10 January 2002 and 31 January 2005, respectively.

Annex I

Excerpts from the Staff Rules and administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2

Excerpts from Staff Rules

Rule 103.20

Education grant

Definitions

(a) For the purposes of this rule:

(i) "Child" means a child of a staff member who is dependent on the staff member for main and continuing support;

(ii) "Disabled child" means a child who is unable, by reasons of physical or mental disability, to attend a normal educational institution and requires special teaching or training to prepare him or her for full integration into society or, while attending a normal educational institution, requires special teaching or training to assist him or her in overcoming the disability;

(iii) "Home country" means the country of home leave of the staff member under rule 105.3. If both parents are eligible staff members, "home country" means the country of home leave of either parent;

(iv) "Duty station" means the country, or area within commuting distance notwithstanding national boundaries, where the staff member is serving.

Eligibility

(b) Subject to conditions established by the Secretary-General, a staff member shall be entitled to an education grant in respect of each child, provided that:

(i) The staff member is regarded as an international recruit under rule 104.7 and resides and serves at a duty station which is outside his or her home country;

(ii) The child is in full-time attendance at a school, university or similar educational institution; and

(iii) The appointment or assignment of the staff member is for a minimum of six months or, if initially for a period of less than six months, is extended so that total continuous service is at least six months.

(c) If a staff member eligible under paragraph (b) is reassigned to a duty station within his or her home country in the course of a school year, he or she may receive the education grant for the balance of that school year.

(d) The Secretary-General may also authorize payment of the education grant during mission service of not less than six months to a staff member regarded under rule 104.6 as a local recruit at his or her normal duty station.

Duration

(e) (i) The grant shall be payable up to the end of the school year in which the child completes four years of post-secondary studies or is awarded the first recognized degree, whichever is earlier;

(ii) The grant will not normally be payable beyond the school year in which the child reaches the age of twenty-five years. If the child's education is interrupted for at least one school year by national service, illness or other compelling reasons, the period of eligibility shall be extended by the period of interruption.

Amount of the grant

(f) The amounts to which a staff member may be entitled under the grant are set out in appendix G to these Rules.

(g) The amount of the grant to be paid when the staff member's period of service or the child's school attendance does not cover the full school year shall be prorated under conditions to be defined by the Secretary-General. No prorating shall be required when the staff member dies while in service after the beginning of the school year.

Travel

(h) A staff member to whom an education grant is payable under paragraphs (i), (ii) or (iv) of appendix G in respect of the child's attendance at an educational institution shall be entitled to travel expenses for the child of one return journey each scholastic year between the educational institution and the duty station, under conditions established by the Secretary-General. If travel to the duty station by the child is not possible, return travel by the staff member or spouse may be authorized in lieu of travel by the child, under conditions established by the Secretary-General.

[SR 103.20 (h) as amended by ST/SGB/2004/1, effective 1 January 2004]

(i) Two return journeys may be paid for children of eligible staff serving at designated duty stations, under conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Tuition in the mother tongue

(j) Tuition in the mother tongue under staff regulation 3.2(c) may be reimbursed subject to conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Special education grant for disabled children

(k) A special education grant for disabled children shall be available to staff members of all categories, whether or not serving in their home country, provided that they have an appointment of six months or longer or have completed six months of continuous service. The amounts to which a staff member is entitled under the grant are set out in appendix G to these Rules, under conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Claims

(l) Claims for the education grant shall be made in accordance with conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Rule 203.8

Education grant

Definitions

(a) For the purposes of this rule:

(i) "Child" means a child of an individual who is dependent upon that individual for main and continuing support;

(ii) "Disabled child" means a child who is unable, by reasons of physical or mental disability, to attend a normal educational institution and requires special teaching or training to prepare him or her for full integration into society or, while attending a normal educational institution, requires special teaching or training to assist him or her in overcoming the disability;

(iii) "Home country" means the country of home leave of project personnel under rule 205.2;

(iv) "Duty station" means the country, or area within commuting distance notwithstanding national boundaries, where the project personnel are serving.

Eligibility

(b) Subject to conditions established by the Secretary-General, project personnel shall be entitled to an education grant in respect of each child, provided that:

(i) The project personnel are in intermediate-term or long-term status and reside and serve at a duty station which is outside their home country;

(ii) The child is in full-time attendance at a school, university or similar educational institution.

(c) If eligible project personnel are reassigned to a duty station within their home country in the course of a school year, they may receive the education grant for the balance of that school year.

Duration

(d) (i) The grant shall be payable up to the end of the school year in which the child completes four years of post-secondary studies or is awarded the first recognized degree, whichever is earlier;

(ii) The grant will not normally be payable beyond the school year in which the child reaches the age of 25 years. If the child's education is interrupted for at least one school year by national service, illness or other compelling reasons, the period of eligibility shall be extended by the period of interruption.

Amount of the grant

(e) The amounts to which project personnel may be entitled under the grant are set out in appendix III to the present Rules.

(f) The amount of the grant to be paid when the project personnel's period of service or the child's school attendance does not cover the full school year shall be prorated under conditions defined by the Secretary-General. No prorating shall be required when project personnel die while in service after the beginning of the school year.

Travel

(g) Project personnel in intermediate-term or long-term status to whom an education grant is payable under paragraphs (i), (ii) or (iv) of appendix III to the present Rules in respect of the child's attendance at an educational institution shall be entitled to travel expenses for the child of one return journey each scholastic year between the educational institution and the duty station, under conditions established by the Secretary-General. If travel to the duty station by the child is not possible, return travel by the project personnel or spouse may be authorized in lieu of travel by the child, under conditions established by the Secretary-General.

[SR 203.8 (g) as amended by ST/SGB/2004/2, effective 1 January 2004]

(h) Two return journeys may be paid for children of eligible project personnel serving at designated duty stations, under conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Tuition in the mother tongue

(i) Tuition in the mother tongue under staff regulation 3.2 (c) may be reimbursed subject to conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Special education grant for disabled children

(j) A special education grant for disabled children shall be available to project personnel in intermediate-term or long-term status, whether or not serving in their home country. The amounts to which project personnel are entitled under the grant are set out in appendix III to the present Rules, under conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Claims

(k) Claims for the education grant shall be made in accordance with conditions established by the Secretary-General.

Excerpts from administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2

Section 1
Eligibility

1.2 Staff members eligible for the education grant solely because of mission service as provided by staff rule 103.20 (d) shall also be subject to the following conditions:

(a) The staff member is detailed for a minimum period of six months to a mission area or, if initially for less than six months, is extended so that the continuous period of mission service is at least six months;

(b) The education grant will be payable only in respect of the staff member's period of mission assignment.

Section 2
Conditions of entitlement

Eligible staff members may claim the education grant when the following conditions are met:

(a) The child is in full-time attendance at an educational institution at the primary level or above while the staff member is in the service of the United Nations. Education shall be deemed 'primary' for the purposes of this instruction when the child is five years or older at the beginning of the school year, or when the child reaches age five within three months of the beginning of the school year;

(b) The entitlement shall terminate when the child ceases to be in full-time attendance at an educational institution, or completes four years of post-secondary studies, or is awarded the first recognized post-secondary degree, whichever is earlier;

(c) There shall be no entitlement beyond the scholastic year in which the child reaches the age of 25, unless the child's education has been interrupted for more than one year by compulsory national service, illness or other compelling reason. In such cases, the grant may be extended for the period of interruption beyond the scholastic year in which the child reaches the age of 25.

Annex II

List of certain non-admissible expenses

Expenses which do not qualify as admissible expenses, as defined in section 3.1 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2, are considered non-admissible expenses. Non-admissible expenses include, but are not limited to, the following expenses, subject to the conditions set forth in section 3.5 of administrative instruction ST/AI/2004/2:

- After school programmes
- Annual fees/ donations/ voluntary contributions
- Camp (summer)
- Computers (purchase of)
- Damages
- Driver education
- Equipment (non-mandatory)
- Extra-curricular activities (non-mandatory)
- Field trips (non-mandatory)
- Health insurance
- Insurance
- Instruments (e.g. purchase of musical instruments, calculators, microscopes)
- Late fees
- Transportation (public bus/train, private car/taxi)
- Tuition refund plan

Annex III

Education grant entitlements applicable in cases where educational expenses are incurred in currencies stated below

(Effective as from the school year in progress on 1 January 2005)

Currency	*(1)* *Maximum amount admissible educational expenses and maximum grant for disabled children*	*(2)* *Maximum education grant*	*(3)* *Normal flat rate when boarding not provided*	*(4)* *Additional flat rate for boarding (at designated duty stations)*	*(5)* *Maximum grant for staff members serving at designated duty stations*	*(6)* *Calculation for maximum admissible educational expenses (attendance only)*
Euro						
Austria	15 198	11 399	3 392	5 087	16 486	10 676
Belgium	14 446	10 835	3 147	4 720	15 555	10 251
Finland	9 082	6 812	2 382	3 572	10 384	5 907
France	10 263	7 697	2 716	4 074	11 771	6 641
Germany	18 993	14 245	3 794	5 690	19 935	13 935
Ireland	10 997	8 248	2 755	4 132	12 380	7 324
Italy	15 316	11 487	2 818	4 227	15 714	11 559
Luxembourg	14 446	10 835	3 147	4 720	15 555	10 251
Monaco	10 263	7 697	2 716	4 074	11 771	6 641
Netherlands	15 440	11 580	3 594	5 392	16 972	10 648
Spain	13 762	10 322	2 733	4 099	14 421	10 119
Danish krone	89 010	66 758	23 601	35 401	102 159	57 543
Japanese yen	2 324 131	1 743 098	525 930	788 895	2 531 993	1 622 891
Norwegian krone	71 632	53 724	18 338	27 507	81 231	47 181
Swedish krona	100 733	75 550	22 569	33 853	109 403	70 641
Swiss franc	26 868	20 151	5 182	7 773	27 924	19 959
Pound sterling	18 285	13 714	3 181	4 772	18 486	14 044
United States dollar (in the United States of America)[a]	28 832	21 624	4 742	7 113	28 737	22 509
United States dollar (outside the United States of America)	17 189	12 892	3 490	5 235	18 127	12 536

[a] Also applies, as a special measure, for China, Indonesia, Romania and the Russian Federation.

Annex IV

Forms to be used in the preparation of claims for the education grant and the special education grant

The following forms required to submit a claim related to the education grant are included in the present annex for ease of reference of staff members:

- Form P.41 — Certificate of attendance and costs and receipt for payments;
- Form P.41/A — Certificate of tuition in the mother tongue;
- Form P.41/B — Certificate of school attendance;
- Form P.45 — Request for payment of education grant and/or advance against education grant;
- Form P.66 — Request for education grant travel;
- Form F.10 — Voucher for reimbursement of expenses.

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

CERTIFICATE OF ATTENDANCE AND COSTS AND RECEIPT FOR PAYMENTS

A. TO BE COMPLETED BY THE UNITED NATIONS STAFF MEMBER *(complete items 1-4)*

1. Name of Staff Member *(Parent)*: 2. UN Index Number 3. Name of Child *(Student)*: 4. Child's Date of Birth: *(dd/mm/yyyy)*

B. TO BE FULLY COMPLETED BY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ONLY

To: Educational Institutions attended by a child of a United Nations staff member.

For your information, staff members of the United Nations are entitled, under certain conditions, to an education grant. This form has been devised to assist in determining their entitlement and in establishing the amount of the grant. Your co-operation in completing this form will be much appreciated. Please note that the information on this form shall cover **one school year only!**

Please return the original to the staff member and retain a copy for your files. This may also facilitate confirmation of the information which is performed by the United Nations on a periodic and routine basis.

1. The **school year** began: _____ *(day, month, year)*	and ended: _____ *(day, month, year)*		
2. The **student attended school** from: _____ *(day, month, year)*	to: _____ *(day, month, year)*		
3. Was the student in **full time school attendance**?	☐ Yes ☐ No	Remarks:	
4. The student was in **grade/level/class/form**:		5. Student **ID Number**:	
6. Were all **textbooks** provided by the school at no additional cost?	☐ Yes ☐ No		
7. Did the institution provide **food and lodging** to student?	☐ Yes ☐ No	If yes, the cost was	
8. If not, did the institution charge for a **lunch programme**?	☐ Yes ☐ No	If yes, the cost was	
9. Was daily group **transportation** provided by or through the institution?	☐ Yes ☐ No	If yes, the cost was	

10. The institution charged the following **expenses** *(Please indicate the currency):*

(a) **Admission Fee**: _____ (b) **Registration Fee**: _____ (c) **Tuition Fee**: _____ (d) **Examination/Diploma Fee**: _____

(e) List other **mandatory expenses** charged by the institution.*

(f) List any **optional expenses** elected by the student.*

11. If applicable, the amount of **non-UN scholarship, grant(s) or any financial assistance** *(excluding loans)*:

12. The UN Staff member (Parent) made the following **payments** *(including loan payments)* to the institution.*

Currency, amount and date	Currency, amount and date	Currency, amount and date	Currency, amount and date

13. School name and address:

14. Telephone No.: 15. Fax No.: 16. E-mail address:

17. Name and Title of Officer authorized to sign on behalf of Educational Institution:

18. Signature of Officer: Date:

19. SEAL of Educational Institution:

If necessary, please itemize on a separate attached sheet and ensure that it is initialled by the Signatory.

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES		**CERTIFICATE OF TUITION IN THE MOTHER TONGUE** **ATTESTATION CONCERNANT L'ÉTUDE DE LA LANGUE MATERNELLE**

Name of child / *Nom de l'enfant*	Name of staff member / *Nom du fonctionnaire*	ID # / *Numéro de la carte d'identité*

To: Educational institution or tutor

Staff members of the United Nations are entitled, under certain conditions, to payment of an education grant. Subject to some requirements, the cost of tuition in the mother tongue is taken into account for the purposes of the grant. This form has been devised to assist in determining the costs incurred by the staff member for such tuition and must be accompanied by cancelled cheques or copies of original cheques accompanied by bank statements. Your cooperation in completing this form will be much appreciated. Please return the original to the staff member and retain the copy for your files. This may also facilitate confirmation of the information, which is performed by the United Nations on a periodic and routine basis.

Destinataires : L'établissement d'enseignement ou le professeur

Les fonctionnaires de l'ONU ont droit, sous réserve de certaines conditions, à une indemnité pour frais d'études. Sous réserve aussi de diverses conditions, le coût de l'enseignement de la langue maternelle entre en ligne de compte pour le calcul de l'indemnité. La présente formule a pour objet de déterminer les frais que cet enseignement a entraînés pour le fonctionnaire. Vous devez y joindre les chèques payés et oblitérés ou une copie des chèques originaux accompagnée des relevés bancaires correspondants. Le concours que vous prêterez en remplissant la formule sera vivement apprécié. Veuillez retourner l'original au fonctionnaire de l'ONU et conserver le double dans vos dossiers. Cette formule pourra aussi aider l'ONU dans ses vérifications ordinaires périodiques.

This is to certify that (child's name) _____ received tutoring in the _____ language
Je certifie que (nom de l'enfant) *a suivi des cours de (langue enseignée)*

during the period from (day/month/year) _____ until (day/month/year) _____.
pendant la période du (jour/mois/année) *au (jour/mois/année)*

He/she was taught / *L'enfant a suivi des cours*
daily/*chaque jour* _____ (yes/no) *(oui/non)* from/*de* _____ (am/pm) *(heures)* to/*à* _____ (am/pm) *(heures)*, or/*ou*
weekly/*chaque semaine* _____ (no. days/*nombre de jours*) from/*de* _____ (am/pm) *(heures)* to/*à* _____ (am/pm) *(heures)*, or/*ou*
monthly/*chaque mois* _____ (no. days/*nombre de jours*) from/*de* _____ (am/pm) *(heures)* to/*à* _____ (am/pm) *(heures)*.

Total number of lessons for the year: _____.
Nombre total de leçons durant l'année:

The tuition was on a group ☐ or individual ☐ basis. (Please check one.)
S'est-il agi de cours collectifs ☐ *ou de leçons particulières?* ☐

The tuition fees were _____ per hour/lesson.
Le tarif a été de *l'heure/la leçon.*

(For instruction by a private tutor, please attach evidence of your certification as a teacher of the language of instruction)
(Dans le cas de leçons particulières, joindre votre certificat d'aptitude à l'enseignement de la langue concernée)

(Please attach a brief statement on the child's linguistic ability in this language.)
(Veuillez joindre une brève description des capacités de l'enfant dans la langue enseignée.)

Payments were made by the staff member to the institution or tutor as follows. (Please indicate currency, amount and date of each payment.)
Le fonctionnaire a acquitté à l'établissement ou au professeur les montants ci-après (veillez à toujours préciser la monnaie et la date).

Currency, amount and date *Monnaie, montant et date*	Currency, amount and date *Monnaie, montant et date*	Currency, amount and date *Monnaie, montant et date*	Currency, amount and date *Monnaie, montant et date*

IMPORTANT:

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL SECTIONS AND ENSURE THAT ANY ATTACHMENTS OR CORRECTIONS ARE INITIALLED BY THE SIGNATORY. (FOR PRIVATE TUTOR, PLEASE PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF YOUR CERTIFICATION IN THE LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION)

VEILLEZ À CE QU'IL SOIT RÉPONDU À TOUTES LES QUESTIONS ET À CE QUE TOUTE PIÈCE JOINTE OU CORRECTION SOIT PARAPHÉE PAR LE SIGNATAIRE. (DANS LE CAS DE LEÇONS PARTICULIÈRES, JOINDRE VOTRE CERTIFICAT D'APTITUDE À L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LA LANGUE CONCERNÉE)

SEAL of educational institution
(if applicable)

CACHET de l'établissement d'enseignement
(le cas échéant)

Name and title of officer signing on behalf of institution or of tutor /
Nom et qualité de l'administrateur ayant la signature ou du professeur

SIGNATURE :

School address / *Adresse de l'établissement*

Tutor's address / *Adresse du professeur*

Telephone no. / *Numéro de téléphone*

(home / *domicile*):

(work / *bureau*):

ORIGINAL + 1 copy/1 copie

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

Certificate of School Attendance

For the School Year
(Please type or print all information legibly)

This is to certify that _____
(Name of Child)

son/daughter of _____
(Name of Staff Member)

was in ***full-time attendance*** *at* _____
(School/College/University)

and regularly attended class in the _____ *grade*
(Form, Level or Class)

from _____ to _____
(Day) (Month) (Year) (Day) (Month) (Year)

The actual school year began on _____
(Day) (Month) (Year)

and ended on _____.
(Day) (Month) (Year)

SEAL OF
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

Signature:_____

_____
Name and Title of officer
signing on behalf of educational institution

Date: _____
Place: _____

For United Nations' Use only:

Name of Staff Member	Index No.	Dept/Div/Office

P.41/B(1-00)

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

REQUEST FOR PAYMENT OF EDUCATION GRANT AND/OR ADVANCE AGAINST EDUCATION GRANT

INSTRUCTIONS: All applicants must complete Part I and Part II of this form. Applicants for Payment of Education Grant must complete Part III. Applicants for Advance against the Education Grant must complete revised Part IV. Submit original to your Human Resources Officer.

Instructions for Part III, Textbooks: Textbook expenses may be claimed only if textbooks were not provided free of charge. If so, select one option --- fixed amount or actual amount spent. If actual amount spent option is selected and the amount is greater than the fixed amount (i.e. $210 at the primary level, $420 at the secondary level, and $840 at the post-secondary level), attach form P.41/C completed by the educational institution.

Instructions for Part IV: For each child, if a grant was paid for the previous year, this advance will automatically
be paid at 100 per cent of the previous year's grant. If you anticipate a lower grant than the previous year, indicate the lower amount in item IV (c). If no grant was paid for the previous year, or if you request a higher amount than the previous year, indicate the amount in item IV (c), and attach documentation to substantiate the amount requested.

I. REQUEST AND CERTIFICATION

I request an advance against the education grant for the next school year to ; AND/OR claim the education grant for the scholastic year to as shown in Parts III and IV of this form. I understand that there is no obligation to make payments ahead of the schedule established by the school and that this advance will be recovered from my salary if the required documentation is not submitted.

I have disclosed all scholarship(s), bursary or similar grant(s) in respect of the child/children. I have not claimed expenses related to textbooks if textbooks were provided free of charge. I understand that, if anticipated costs on the basis of which the advance was granted become lower, I am required to notify the Organization promptly.

I certify that the statements made by me, and the information provided by me on this form and the attached documentation are true and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief; and that no other education grant is being paid in respect of the child/children for the periods indicated.

Signature of Staff Member: …… Date: ……
(dd/mm/yyyy)

*** To print page 2, turn over this page and manual feed your printer. Please note that for the claim to be valid, it must be submitted on a double-sided form.**

UNITED NATIONS		REQUEST FOR PAYMENT OF EDUCATION GRANT AND/OR ADVANCE AGAINST THE EDUCATION GRANT

II. Staff Member: *Follow instructions on page 1. Parts I and II must be completed.*

Last Name of Staff Member	First	Mid. Initial	Index No.	Level	Dept. or Div.	Ext.	Room No.
Type of Appointment	Expiry Date	Entrance on Duty Date (d/m/y)		Home Country	Duty Station		Type of U.S. Visa

Child's Name			
Date of Birth (d/m/y)			
Name of School or University attended			
Location of School (City, Country)			
Level of Instruction (Class or Grade)			

III. Request for Education Grant

School Year (From – To)	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year
Child attended School (From – To)	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year
Actual Cost (Attach P.41 and/or other receipts)	Currency and amount	Currency and amount	Currency and amount
Textbook Cost: Elect one option. Read instructions on page 1.	Check box for fixed amount OR Specify Amount ☐ US$	Check box for fixed amount OR Specify Amount ☐ US$	Check box for fixed amount OR Specify Amount ☐ US$
Tuition in Mother Tongue (Attach P.41/A)	Currency and amount	Currency and amount	Currency and amount
Other Private Tuition	Currency and amount	Currency and amount	Currency and amount

IV. Request for Advance against the Education Grant

(a) School Year (From – To)	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year	Day/Month/Year – Day/Month/Year
Choose one (b or c) (b) 100% of last year (Check box)	☐	☐	☐
(c) First advance / higher amount than previous year	US$	US$	US$

FOR OFFICIAL USE OF OHRM

School Location	DUTY STN. ☐ HOME CTRY ☐ OTHER CTRY ☐	DUTY STN. ☐ HOME CTRY ☐ OTHER CTRY ☐	DUTY STN. ☐ HOME CTRY ☐ OTHER CTRY ☐
Admissible Cost			
Maximum Entitlement (if prorated)			
Advance requested in Part IV authorized			

Staff member entitled as above. For the ASG, OHRM: (Print Name & SIGN)	Date:

FOR OFFICIAL USE OF OPPBA

Flat Sum for Board			
Cost of Attendance (including/excluding board)	X 75% =	X 75% =	X 75% =
Total Entitlement per Child	US$	US$	US$

GRAND TOTAL:	**LESS: Advance Outstanding**	**Net Payment (US$):**

Examiner: OPPBA (Print name & SIGN)	Date:

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

REQUEST FOR EDUCATION GRANT TRAVEL

I. To be prepared by STAFF MEMBER and submitted, in advance of travel, to

OPERATIONAL SERVICES DIVISION/OHRM

Last Name of Staff Member	First	Mid. Initial	Entrance on duty date(dd,mm,yyyy)	*Type of appointment, and, if fixed-term, expiry date: (dd,mm.yyyy)*

Home Country:	*Duty Station:*	*Department or Division:*	*Level:*	*Room No.*	*Phone Ext.*	*Type of U.S. Visa*

Child's Name.....									
Child's Date of Birth. (dd,mm,yyyy).....									
Name of School or University attended									
Location of School: ***CITY.....***									
COUNTRY.....									
	(day)	*(month)*	*(year)*	*(day)*	*(month)*	*(year)*	*(day)*	*(month)*	*(year)*
School Year ***BEGINS*** *on.....*									
ENDS *on.....*									
Child attending School ***FROM.....***									
TO.....									
Child's travel requested FROM: (Place of Departure).....									
TO: (Destination).....									
	(day)	*(month)*	*(year)*	*(day)*	*(month)*	*(year)*	*(day)*	*(month)*	*(year)*
Intended Departure Date.....									
Intended Return Date									
Date of Child's last education grant travel:									
Staff Member's last official travel on home leave or to visit dependants ended				*Staff Member's next home leave or travel to visit dependants due in.....*					

I hereby certify that the information furnished by me on this form is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I claim the education grant travel in respect of my child/children to which I am entitled on the basis of this information.

INDEX NO.	Signature of Staff member	Date (d/m/y):

II. To be completed by HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER and forwarded to EXECUTIVE OFFICER

I hereby certify the entitlement of the staff member to one round trip/one-way travel between the educational institution attended by the child and the staff member's duty station at a cost not to exceed cost of travel between staff member's place of home leave and duty station as follows:

Name of Child	Authorized Place of Departure	Authorized Destination	Approximate Departure Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Approximate Return Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

ATTENTION EXECUTIVE OFFICER: ***ANY MAJOR DEVIATION FROM AUTHORIZED ITINERARY OR DATES OF TRAVEL SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER BEFORE TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION IS ISSUED.***

REMARKS:	
(Date)	(For the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management) Name and Title:

Original – Executive Office Copy to: OSD/OHRM Staff Member

UNITED NATIONS NATIONS UNIES

VOUCHER FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

To be completed by Finance:	Cheque No.	Examiner:	Currency:	Voucher No.:
Amount:	Bank No.	Approving Officer:	Country:	Date:

To be completed by the Claimant (Please type or print)

Payee:	Index no.:	Category:

Reimbursement				
☐ Reimbursement through Payroll			Duty Station:	
☐ Direct deposit to Bank Account:	Bank name & account no:		Dept./Div./ Office:	
and Payee Advice to be mailed to:	Mail address or room no:		Travel Req./ PT 8/Aut. no.:	
☐ Cheque to pick up from Cashier's office:	Your e-mail and phone no:		Account/BAC no.:	
☐ Cheque to be mailed to:	Mail address:			

DATE (d/m./y)	At-tach-ment No.	**DESCRIPTION OF EXPENSES** *Tickets purchased, Terminal Expenses, Telegrammes, Taxis, Authorized excess baggage, unaccompanied shipments etc.*	LOCAL CURRENCY	EXCHANGE RATE	U.S.$ EQUIVALENT	*For official use only* APPROVED AMOUNT
			TOTAL TRAVEL ALLOWANCE (*See next page*)			

I claim the subsistence and terminal expenses in connection with the journey (as indicated on the reverse side hereof), which I certify to have been made as authorized. I certify that all amounts claimed either represent actual disbursements made by me or, if standard rates were applied, agree with my entitlements. I further certify that dependants indicated, actually travelled as shown.

Signature of Claimant: _____ *Date: (d/m/y)* _____

This claim is in conformity with the journey as actually authorized. Payment of subsistence and/or transit allowances is approved for all official stopovers and necessary travel time reported by the Claimant on the reverse side, except as otherwise noted by me.

☐ NO EXCEPTIONS ☐ FINAL CLAIM ☐ FOR EXCEPTIONS, SEE next page

Name and Signature of Admin./Certifying Officer: _____ *Date: (d/m/y)* _____

TOTAL	
LESS ADVANCES	
BALANCE DUE TO UN IF ANY	
NET PAYMENT	

GENERAL ACCOUNT	AMOUNT (U.S.$) Dr. or Cr.*	ALLOTMENT ACCOUNT	LIQUIDATION AMOUNT	OBLIGATION DOCUMENT	DESCRIPTION/I.O.V.
Total Debits	Total Credits		Total Liquidations		

*Indicate by brackets

Submit original claim to UNHQ/OPPBA

(Continued on next page)

TO BE COMPLETED BY CLAIMANT

PLEASE TYPE or PRINT: Extra sheets should be attached with full explanation of lengthy or involved travel. Submit a separate Form F.10 if eligible dependants have itineraries that differ from yours. Subsistence may be subject to a reduction after 60 days under Staff Rules.

Do you have eligible dependants residing with you at your official duty station?
Yes ☐ No ☐

ANNUAL LEAVE TO BE CHARGED:

DAYS

For Official use only

Remarks: List names and ages of dependants

CITY AND COUNTRY OF DEPARTURE AND ARRIVAL	MODE OF TRAVEL ***Air, Ferry, Rail, Official/Personal/Hired Car, Bus,***	DATE DAY/ MONTH/ YEAR	HOUR*	Indicate whether UN or GOVT. vehicle was made available at DEP and/or ARR **Yes or No**	Indicate number of days that **Accommodation** or **Meals** were provided		*COMMENTS OF ADM./CERTIFYING OFFICER REGARDING STOP-OVERS, DELAYS, ETC.*
DEP.:					Accommodation Meals		
ARR.:					Accommodation Meals		
	Official ☐	Personal ☐					
DEP.:					Accommodation Meals		
ARR.:					Accommodation Meals		
	Official ☐	Personal ☐					
DEP.:					Accommodation Meals		
ARR.:					Accommodation Meals		
	Official ☐	Personal ☐					
DEP.:					Accommodation Meals		
ARR.:					Accommodation Meals		
	Official ☐	Personal ☐					
DEP.:					Accommodation Meals		
ARR.:					Accommodation Meals		
	Official ☐	Personal ☐					
DEP.:					Accommodation Meals		
ARR.:					Accommodation Meals		
	Official ☐	Personal ☐					

**HOUR should indicate time of departure from or arrival at airports, piers or railroad stations. Any deviation from itinerary and standards of accommodation authorized, and any stopover not authorized thereby must be supported by full explanation; otherwise your claim may be reduced.*

NOTICE TO TRAVELLER: All receipts for transportation and excess baggage, used air transportation stubs and any unused transportation tickets and excess baggage coupons (MCO's) must be returned to the United Nations together with the original Travel Authorization and attached to the claim.

REMARKS: *(List here attached unused tickets by stating ticket Number and the route covered by the ticket.)*

Total Travel Allowance in U.S. $ ……

For Official use only:

Value of MCO's received:	*U.S.$*
Value of MCO's used:	*U.S.$*
BALANCE OF MCO's to be returned to the U.N.:	*U.S.$*

Initial:

Date:

The balance of the MCO's is represented by the following coupon numbers: