

Attn: Christine  
PA to Minister Bayigamba

RECU PAR  
SECAB  
LE 01.04.04

1<sup>st</sup> April 2004

Dear Christine,

Do hope this finds you well.

I am enclosing for the attention of Minister Bayigamba, company profile information regarding Aegis. This is required for the information of the National Tender board.

Please do let me know if you require any further information.

With kind regards,



Claire Jeffcoat  
Office Manager

## **Aegis Trust**

### **The Concept**

The Aegis Trust confronts the causes and consequences of genocide. Working with survivors, decision-makers and with the next generation, through commemoration, education, policy advice, awareness-raising and research, it acts as a catalyst for change in policy on genocidal situations.

Response to the threat of genocide must move from reactive to proactive, yet remain evidence-based.

Aegis works with partner organisations to create tools for those in a position to make change and implement prevention strategies.

Aegis is driven by the imperative that no-one, whoever they are, should have to face discrimination, even death, as a result of their ethnic origin or beliefs.

There are no quick solutions and it will not be easy, yet we cannot resign ourselves to the inevitability of mass murder in the 21st century

### **History**

The Aegis Trust was launched in 2000 by Drs James and Stephen Smith. Its creation emerged from the experience of Beth Shalom, the UK Holocaust Centre, established by the Smith family in 1995.

Beth Shalom provides a range of facilities for people of all backgrounds and persuasions to explore the history and implications of the Holocaust. It comprises a permanent exhibition on the Nazi period, memorial gardens and a multi-functional memorial building. It also contains a conference, library, seminar and research facilities that are used by students, teachers and lay people of all ages and at all levels. Beth Shalom believes in an active approach to education and commemoration and currently, eighteen thousand school children visit the centre every year. Every child who visits hears a Holocaust survivor speak on his/her experiences and is presented with the facts on the consequences of prejudice and discrimination.

Stephen Smith was also instrumental in initiating the annual Holocaust Memorial Day in the UK, the first of which was in January 2001. He advised and worked with the UK Home Office, representatives from the FCO and other organisations to bring about this nationwide annual commemoration to the victims of the Holocaust. The Holocaust Centre has worked closely with the Home Office in recent years, on the communications and implementation of this.

From the precedent of the Holocaust, the Smiths were aware that genocide develops over a period of time. As the Holocaust Centre was being prepared for opening in 1994, the genocide in Rwanda and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia rendered the post-Holocaust promise, 'never again', utterly hollow – and threw into relief the failure of

the international community to either predict or respond effectively to these unfolding tragedies.

The Kosovo crisis in 1999, which was genocidal in nature, led the brothers to engage in practical action, first initiating aid for the refugees and then working with the International Medical Corps. This sharpened their concern that once again, time and resources were needed to react to a crisis that should have been prevented in the first place, and so the Aegis Trust was born.

### **The Present**

Today, the Aegis Trust works with a wide range of partners, including governmental, non-governmental, educational and academic institutions around the world.

Aegis works closely with several UK government departments on Holocaust and genocide issues, and plays a leading role in the Intergovernmental Task Force for Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research established by Bill Clinton, Goran Persson and Tony Blair in 1998. As special advisor to the Swedish Prime Minister's Office on genocide issues, Aegis Director Stephen Smith has been involved in the organisation of the Stockholm International Forum from the beginning.

The experience of the UK Holocaust Centre has been applied successfully in the establishment of other centres dealing with memorial and education themes, most notably the Cape Town Holocaust Centre and the Lithuanian House of Memory in Vilnius.

In Rwanda, the Aegis Trust is working with the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture (MIJESPOC) and the survivors' umbrella organisation Ibuka on memorialisation and documentation of the genocide. Major projects include establishing the Kigali Memorial Centre in Kigali, Rwanda, due to open on 7 April 2004, along with Africa's first genocide prevention centre, due to open at Murambi, Rwanda, also due to open in April. In addition, Aegis is conducting a project to create an audiovisual archive of Gacaca, Rwanda's post-genocide justice process, with the first phase of the project funded by Comic Relief.

In 2002, Aegis created a new international award, the Aegis Award, for those who put their careers and personal safety on the line to preserve the value of human life in the face of genocide or mass violence. The inaugural recipient was Lt Gen Romeo Dallaire, UN force commander in Rwanda during the genocide.