

4 August 1982

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

You may recall that, during our lunch at the VIC Restaurant a few months ago, we discussed the question of the future of the CSDHA, including staffing requirements. You seemed to agree that, in addition to changes in structure and mandate, the Centre can only be brought back on a right keel through high-level personnel improvements. Among the possible candidates for the top job, I mentioned one whom I thought would be eminently suitable, and promised to come back with further information in due time. This I am now doing, after having met the person in question and sounded her out on the matter.

She is, as you may remember, Dr. Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo, of Portugal. She is now, I believe, in her mid-fifties, and is an atomic engineer by profession. However, most of her career has been spent in the social field, in Portuguese humanitarian NGO's (including the National Council on Women) during the previous régime, when she was also a non-party MP during the years preceding the 1974 revolution. She then became Secretary of State for social security in the newly created Ministry of Social Affairs under the first provisional government and Minister of Social Affairs in the following one. Later, she was Portuguese Ambassador to the UNESCO until, in August 1979, she was nominated Prime Minister of the transitional government covering the period up till the 1980 regular elections. She is now a personal counsellor to President Ramalho Eanes, dealing mainly with matters of international co-operation and relations with third world countries, including the former colonies.

She is completely fluent in French, English and Spanish.

In my previous capacity as Chief of the UN European Social Development Programme in Geneva, I was closely associated with Dr. Pintasilgo and her work from the early weeks of the post-revolution era. At her request, my office convened an international advisory meeting in 1975 on the structure and functioning of the new Ministry of Social Affairs, under her chairmanship; she later on (in 1977) served as an expert on a similar advisory body which was organized at the request of the Spanish Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. She was also of help in my work for the Division of Narcotic Drugs in 1976 to 1978, in setting up a Portuguese programme



for drug abuse control, and later called for my assistance, in a private capacity, in the drafting of her government's policy statement and work programme in August 1979..

I have therefore had ample opportunity to appreciate her impressive human and intellectual capacities, her leadership skills, and her deep understanding of social development issues. She also possesses a human warmth and intuition which, at this point, should be rated very highly on the list of requirements for the CSDHA post.

Politically, while she is not formally identified with any party, she may be described as belonging within the broad, moderate left-of-centre area which, after all, has kept Portugal together during the last 8 years.

On the international level, I would expect her to have the potential support of most African countries, due to her firm stand on de-colonization both before and after the revolution, and from most European countries including those of the East. As for the group of 77, - unless they have a strong candidate from among their own - I do not know of any reason why they would oppose her.

When I met with Dr. Pintasilgo in Lisbon some weeks ago, I mentioned this issue in general terms, in order to find out about her eventual availability. I also explained that, should it come to this point, she had better prepare for a rather rough going in Vienna, and be careful to have her conditions and requirements clearly stated and agreed upon from the outset.

She replied that, at this point, she would not in principle be against a period of work in an international setting, outside of Portugal, and that, from many years of association with the work of international organizations, she knew and was prepared for the various internal problems to be faced.

It now appears, from various sources, that a change of leadership is not out of the question when the two-year mandate of the present incumbent expires at the end of 1982. If and when the UN administration and member governments interested in the future of the CSDHA want to ensure a qualitative change in the



leadership of the Centre, - which in the common opinion is sorely needed - the candidature of Dr. Pintasilgo ought to be seriously considered.

Should you wish to pursue this matter on the basis of the above information, please keep in mind that I am writing to you in a purely private capacity; and that I have no direct personal stake in this matter, as I am now resigning from the United Nations.

Yours sincerely,



Eyvind Hytten

## Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

H.E. Mr. J. McDonald, Jr.  
Coordinator for World Assembly on Aging  
Department of State  
Washington, D.C.  
USA

