Dear All:

As you are aware, the IC met on June 11 and 12, 1999, and among other issues discussed, was the unilateral action of MSF Greece in Kosovo this past spring, as well as the breakdown of the Greek-Swiss Common Operational Center. These are events that have taken place against a 10 year history of MSF Greece within the MSF Movement. Unfortunately, MSF Greece chose to present a position to the IC without remaining in the June 11, 12, 1999 meeting for further debate and discussion. The IC discussed the issues outlined in the report “The MSF Greece Mission to the F.R.Y. And the Breakdown of the MSF Greek- Swiss Common Operational Centre Agreement”, prepared in late May at my request by Morton Rostrup (Vice President of the IC) and Stephan Oberreit of MSF France. The report is attached. I urge you to read it and circulate it freely within your section. After five and half hours of discussion on June 12, the IC passed the following resolution:

MSF IC Resolution, June 12, 1999:

The IC was presented with and accepts the report of the fact finding mission of Morton Rostrup and Stephan Oberreit on “The MSF Greece Mission to the F.R.Y. And the Breakdown of the MSF Greek- Swiss Common Operational Centre Agreement”. The IC deeply deplores the explicit decision of MSF Greece not to respond or participate in the debate at the IC meeting of June 12th, 1999, in Amsterdam. The International Council of MSF resolves that:

1. The unilateral MSF Greece mission into Kosovo lacked the independence necessary to facilitate an objective evaluation of the needs of the population and that unacceptable conditions of access were agreed to by MSF Greece which compromised the mission and undermined future attempts by any MSF section to enter into the FRY;

2. that the actions of MSF Greece were carried out without respecting prior decisions of the IC as to how MSF Greece would carry out field operations;

3. that the actions of MSF Greece were carried out with a total lack of transparency, were deliberately misleading to members of the IC, and deliberately avoided international debate and coordination, and

4. that the actions of MSF Greece violated the specific decisions taken by the Executive Committee with regard with the objectives and conditions necessary for a MSF exploratory mission into Kosovo,

the IC considers that the Common Operational Center between Greece and Switzerland has ceased to exist and therefore MSF Greece can no longer carry out operations outside of Greece, effective immediately. The IC wishes MSF-Greece to remain within the MSF-movement, so long as they accept the responsibilities and privileges that go with membership as a partner section. Should MSF Greece refuse to comply in writing with this decision by June 28th, 1999, the IC considers MSF Greece to have forfeited their membership in the IC and to have excluded itself from the MSF-movement. In that case, the IC and all its sections will cease all formal collaboration with MSF-Greece and demand that MSF-Greece ceases all use of the MSF logo and the name “Médecins sans Frontières” in any language. (End of IC resolution).

MSF Greece held a General Assembly on June 26, which Morton Rostrup attended. It has decided to not comply with the IC resolution, and in so doing, it has taken its final step away from the MSF Movement. This is very sad indeed, however as a Movement we must respond accordingly. I have asked Jean Marie Kindermans to ensure that as of July 1, 99 that all formal contact between the MSF movement and the former MSF Section in Greece be stopped. Any and all contact via ccmail is to stop, donors are to be informed, and expatriate personnel working the former MSF Greek section are to be informed of the IC decision so that they can make their own decision as to whether to continue working with them or not.

This is a sad moment in the history of MSF. However it is one that we must face. In having pursued this course of action the former MSF Greece section has left the Movement with no good options, and only the reality of choosing from "bad" options. I believe the decision of the IC is the best possible one, given the circumstances. Jean Marie
Kindermanns will take the necessary steps in the coming weeks to ensure that the IC resolution is met.

Sincerely,

James Orbinski
President, MSF International Council