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EBAP/87/173

August 4, 1987

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: Transfer of the Joint Library to the International Square Building

Attached is a memorandum from the Acting Managing Director on the proposed transfer of the Joint Library to the International Square Building. Any Board consideration of this matter should take place before the informal recess.

Mr. Struckmeyer (ext. 8202) is available to answer technical or factual questions.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:
Department Heads



August 4, 1987

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Acting Managing Director

Subject: Transfer of the Joint Library to the
International Square Building

At a recent meeting of the Executive Board, an Executive Director raised under "Other Business" a question concerning a proposal to move the Joint Library to the newly-acquired space at International Square. He asked that, before a final decision was made on the matter, Executive Directors be more fully informed and their opinions sought. In response to that request, and to supplement the information provided orally at the meeting, I am setting out in this note the main reasons for the proposal and the accompanying measures that would be taken to minimize the inconvenience caused to library users by a move to International Square.

You will recall that the Executive Board recently authorized the leasing of an additional 55,000 square feet of space at the International Square building. Following that decision, the Administration Department undertook an extensive analysis of possible options for moving all or part of different organizational units of the Fund to International Square, taking into account two guiding principles: (i) the need to minimize both inconvenience in carrying on the work of the Fund, and disruption to working relationships within and across the institution; and (ii) the need to make the best use of the available space both at International Square and in the Headquarters building.

On grounds of operational convenience, it was concluded that most of the units now located in the Headquarters should, if at all possible, remain here because of their frequent working contacts with the Executive Board, management and/or other staff units remaining at Headquarters. This group includes the area departments and major functional departments. It also includes a number of specialized or support functions which are servicing internal needs of the Headquarters in a manner that requires day-to-day contact at the staff level, or are closely linked to some special facilities located in the Headquarters building. Certain other units to which these considerations apply less forcefully were excluded from further consideration because they have specialized space needs that cannot readily be accommodated at International Square, or because the space they would vacate at Headquarters is not suitable for general purpose use.

Among the remaining options, the one which appeared to offer most advantages in terms of space was a move of the Joint Library. At present, the library is very overcrowded, and because it is immediately adjacent to the data center now being constructed on the Concourse level, there is no room to expand in its present location. The entire library could be accommodated, without compression, in approximately 36,000 square feet of the space available at International Square. ^{1/} After allowing for necessary public space and a staff cafeteria, this would leave another 4,000 or so square feet available there, which could be used either to shift one standard-sized division from Headquarters in due course, or to provide expansion room for the units already located at International Square (i.e., the Bureau of Statistics and the Bureau of Language Services). Moving the library out of the Headquarters building would permit a consolidation of the Bureau of Computing Services, whose staff is currently scattered over nine floors at Headquarters. After the most serious overcrowding in BCS and certain other Fund units has been relieved, about 15,000 to 20,000 square feet of usable office space at Headquarters, located on several different floors, would be available to meet overall expansion needs of the institution.

To achieve a similar result in terms of usage of space at International Square, it would be necessary as an alternative to move from Headquarters all or part of several divisions in as many as two or three different departments. The optimal use of space is, of course, only one of the considerations on which a final decision must be based. At least equal weight must be given to the implications of a transfer of the Joint Library in terms of inconvenience for library users, not only in the Fund but also in the Bank: about two-thirds of library usage is accounted for by Bank staff. Although a number of satellite libraries serving specialized needs exist, and the operation of these would not be materially affected by the transfer, the Joint Library remains the central source of a number of important information and distribution services for both institutions. However, after consultation with the Joint Librarian and with other departments throughout the Fund, the Administration Department has concluded that arrangements can be made that will minimize the adverse effect on both the library and its users of a transfer to International Square. While some inconvenience is unavoidable, the net impact is less than would be involved under any of the other alternatives that might be considered.

Specifically, in conjunction with a transfer of the Joint Library it is proposed to establish a reference center and reading room in an easily-accessible location at the Headquarters. This center

^{1/} The Fund's architects have determined that the building specifications at International Square are suitable for the needs of the library.

will be equipped with basic reference materials and newspapers, and with several computer terminals linked with the Joint Library's data base. It will be staffed during working hours with a reference librarian to assist users in searching for and requisitioning library materials. In addition, a special messenger service will be established to handle the movement of library materials between the Joint Library at International Square, the World Bank buildings, and the Fund Headquarters. For the convenience of those Bank and Fund users who still wish to visit the library itself, extended hours will be reintroduced for an experimental period, after which the need for this will be further assessed.

The Bank, which as already noted accounts for the major usage of the Joint Library, has been consulted about the proposed transfer, and has indicated that it can accept the proposal on the understanding that the measures to minimize inconvenience outlined above are taken. It is expected that the amounts already authorized by the Executive Board when approving the recommendation to lease further space at International Square will be sufficient to cover both the costs of transferring the Joint Library and the cost of setting up the new reference center. Some additional contractual staff will need to be employed to help man the reference center and the special messenger service, as well as to keep the Joint Library open for extended hours; but over the medium term efforts will be made to offset these additions wherever possible by savings in other library staffing resulting from the different pattern of usage that seems likely to occur in the library.

As you will appreciate, it is necessary for the management to reach a final decision soon on which unit or units are to move to International Square, so that planning can proceed on a firm basis. If, after reading this memorandum, any Executive Director wants further information about the issue, I would suggest that he communicate with the Deputy Director of Administration (Mr. Struckmeyer, Ext. 8202). If a discussion at the Board level is requested, I would propose to schedule this under "Other Business" on Friday, August 7, 1987.

