SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN SUBMITS FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE FORM, ENCOURAGES OTHERS TO FOLLOW

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Continuing United Nations efforts to make the world body more transparent, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who took the rein on 1 January, has already submitted his financial disclosure form to the Ethics Office, his spokesperson said today, adding that he encourages all senior officials to be similarly open.

"The Secretary-General voluntarily submitted his financial disclosure statement to the Ethics Office on his first day in office. His statement will be reviewed, like those of all staff members required to file such statements, by the external financial firm Pricewaterhouse Coopers," Michele Montas told reporters in New York.

"Upon completion of the review, the Secretary-General has also decided to publicly disclose the statement," she said, adding that Mr. Ban intends to declare everything.

Asked whether the Secretary-General would ask all senior officials to make their disclosures public, Ms. Montas said that he encouraged them to be as transparent as possible and volunteer information although they would not be compelled to do so.

She added that the General Assembly had specifically decided that financial disclosures should remain confidential, and may only be used when the Secretary-General requires it in the interests of the Organization.

The new financial disclosure forms, which are more comprehensive than those of the United States Congress, apply to approximately 2,000 UN personnel. They were one of the initiatives aimed at creating greater accountability that were put in place during the tenure of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan, who also submitted the form but never made its contents public.

The UN [Ethics Office](), which provides ethical advice and training for UN staff as well as reviewing the new forms, is also part of the overall strategy to bring more transparency to the organization.

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