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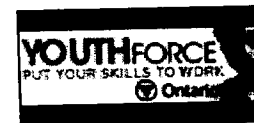
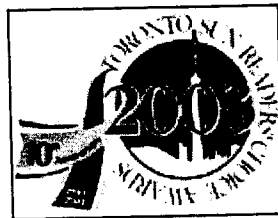
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Sat, July 26, 2003

Martin takes job with UN But didn't talk to PM

By STEPHANIE RUBEC, OTTAWA BUREAU

OTTAWA -- Paul Martin took a job at the United Nations yesterday but didn't check with the boss first. Martin said he didn't tell Prime Minister Jean Chretien he was taking the UN job, but did talk to Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham about it.

"I'm doing this as an individual. This is a matter of great personal interest," Martin said during a teleconference from New York.

"No, I have not talked to the prime minister about this."

PMO spokesman Thoren Hudyma said Martin didn't officially have to check with Chretien.

"There's no formal process in place," Hudyma said. "This is a private arrangement between Mr. Martin and the UN."

DEVELOPING NATIONS

But Chretien is known for keeping a close eye on his government and caucus and controlling all important decisions that could affect the country or the Liberal Party.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan announced Martin's appointment as co-chairman of the commission tasked to reduce red tape for investors in developing countries during a New York press conference yesterday.

Martin will team up with former Mexican president Ernesto Zedillo.

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The UN appointment fulfils a lifelong dream Martin has had to work for the organization.

Martin said he took the job to show Canadians the kind of international impact they can have if he becomes prime minister when Chretien retires next year.

"This is really a pioneering effort. It certainly fits in with my concept of the kind of role that Canada ought to play and the kinds of things Canada can do."

Martin said he'll divide his time between his leadership campaign and the UN job -- just as rival Sheila Copps does with her work as heritage minister.

He and Zedillo will be expected to deliver a report by November, shortly before the Liberal leadership convention where delegates will be asked to choose between him and Copps.

GET KAZEMI BACK

Martin also commented yesterday on the diplomatic rift caused by the beating death in Iran of photojournalist Zahra Kazemi.

While he applauded foreign affairs' decision to recall Canada's ambassador to Iran, Martin urged Graham to do more to force the Iranians to send Kazemi's remains to her son in Montreal and conduct an open inquiry into her death.

"I believe that this is something that Canada must deal with in the strongest terms."

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