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Shared sorrow

In place of our normal letters page, here are some messages and thoughts following the terrorist attacks in the United States, September 11, 2001.

(See *OECD messages*, page 7.)

"We have come together here today in this hall to show our solidarity with you and your fellow Americans all over the world, to share your grief and sorrow and also to seek comfort and consolation together with you. On behalf of us all I offer our condolences.

There are moments in life when one feels small and helpless. You realise what is futile and what is important. Love is important, friendship is important, solidarity is important, life itself is important. When you look around you will find that you are surrounded by friends.

What has been done to you, to your country, to your society, has also been done to us. For we share the same values of freedom, openness, tolerance, democracy. We work with you here every day. We agree and we disagree. But on a day like this, I wonder: what would the world be like without America, without the US.

A darker place, certainly. A place with less freedom. A place with more dogmatism, a place with less tolerance and openness. With less wisdom. With more poverty. What I am trying to say is simply this: we need you, and we are with you in your difficult moment as you have been with us in our difficult moments."

Anders Ferm, Swedish ambassador to the OECD, September 14, 2001. Ambassador Ferm delivered his message to colleagues at Chateau de la Muette before the three-minute silence in mourning for those killed in the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11.

European Union

"There should be no illusion that it was only the Americans that

faced this attack. Democracy itself and the values of freedom and tolerance were the real target." Belgium's prime minister, **Guy Verhofstadt**, in his capacity as president of the European Council, on announcing that Friday 14 September would be considered a day of mourning by the European Union.

From fellow workers

"TUAC joins the rest of the international labour movement in expressing horror and outrage at the callous killing of so many innocent women, men and children in the terrorist attacks of 11th September. All of us in the international labour movement stand in solidarity with our American colleagues at this time resolute in defence of democratic and open societies, based on the universal values of freedom and human dignity."

John Evans, General Secretary Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD (TUAC)

From business and industry

"On behalf of all our members, we would like to extend our deepest sympathies to those touched by the unconscionable terrorist attacks in the United States on Tuesday, September 11, 2001."

Douglas C. Worth, Secretary-General Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD (BIAC)

United Nations

"The vicious acts that have been perpetrated against your country have cut us all to the core, for they are an attack on humanity itself." So wrote the UN secretary-general, **Kofi Annan**, in a letter to US president, George W. Bush. "The United Nations expresses its solidarity with the American government and people in this hour of trial."

To the Mayor of New York City, Rudolf Giuliani, Mr Annan wrote that the UN was grieving with other New Yorkers at the "gaping wound that has been inflicted on

this wonderful city – the city that has been such a good and welcoming host to us."

IMF

"I wish to express our shock and deep sorrow at the tragic events that occurred in the United States yesterday, to express our sympathy with the United States of America, and to extend our heartfelt condolences to the victims and their families."

Horst Köhler, Managing Director, IMF

World Bank

"We express our deepest sympathy and solidarity with the American people, and the United States authorities, and extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of all who were killed or injured in New York, Washington DC, and Pennsylvania.

James D. Wolfensohn, President, World Bank

A New Yorker's view

Playwright **Arthur Miller** called the attacks a war against the human race. Speaking to a French daily, *Le Monde*, he said the attacks were by madmen in love with death. "It is so easy to destroy a town. The extreme vulnerability of New York with its towers, its bridges and its tunnels strikes me every time I cross the city." Mr Miller believes Americans will not make the mistake of falling into a trap of hatred against peoples or religions. He hopes they resist isolationism.

"Nationalism and religion are just excuses. No doubt there were hundreds of Muslims among the victims... Our prosperity has always depended on exports... We need the world as much as the world needs us. Power also brings responsibility." But humanity, he laments, can be a "terribly dangerous species".

Text translated from French.