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U.N. Staffers Plan Sunday 'Peace Swims'

Three United Nations staff members will take mile-long "peace swims" Sunday off the Charleston Battery and the Myrtle Beach Pavilion to focus attention on the U.N.'s "International Year of Peace."

The swimmers also will jump into the Atlantic Ocean at Wilmington, N.C., and Virginia Beach, Va., during a weekend series of swims.

They began Jan. 1 with a 1½-mile swim in Hiroshima, Japan, and another five days later in Nagasaki Harbor.

Since then, staff members have jumped into the water in six South-eastern U.S. states, Bermuda, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

Myrtle Beach and Charleston are 12th and 13th on a list of more than 20 swims the United Nations employees plan this year.

Adhiratha Keefe, Sunil Davidson and Shradha Howard will fly into Myrtle Beach from New York at 9 a.m. They will travel to Charleston for a swim at 2 p.m.

"We're hoping to make people more aware of what the U.N. is doing for peace and to inspire others to make their own efforts for world peace," said Keefe, 38, who swam the English Channel last September to commemorate its 40th anniversary.

The three swimmers belong to the Peace Meditation Group, which meets twice weekly at the United Nations under the leadership of spiritual master Sri Chinmoy.

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U.N. Staff Members Swimming For Peace

By DAWN BRAZELL
Post-Courier Reporter

Two swimmers crawled into Charleston Harbor Sunday, dodging the wake of boats as they swam more than a mile for the United Nations winter peace swim.

Before beginning their journey in 54-degree water, the U.N. staff members pressed their palms together for a moment of silent meditation for world peace. A small banner stuck in the sand near high Battery let passers-by know that they were swimming to focus attention on the U.N.'s "International Year of Peace."

Admiratha Keefe and Sunil Davidson climbed out of the water 36 minutes after they entered it. Keefe shook out his hair and smiled. "The current was rough but the fact that it was warm was nice," he said.

The Charleston swim was the last of a weekend series of swims for

Keefe and Davidson, both 38. They dove into Myrtle Beach waters Sunday morning, after hitting the beaches of Wilmington, N.C., and Virginia Beach, Va., Saturday. Water temperatures in the 30s in Virginia gave them a chill and kept the third member of the group, Shradha Howard, out of Sunday's swim because of a cold.

The group returned to work at the United Nations in New York City today but will hold peace swims on upcoming weekends. They have swum in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, and also in six Southeastern states, Bermuda, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico.

The swims are personally financed by the group and no donations are sought. The three said they hoped the weekend swims would prepare them for tackling the English Channel in September.