



## James Coates

1972 – 2010

James Coates, a national of Canada, held several positions in the UN Department of Public Information before joining the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) in 2008.

An avid guitarist, pianist, singer, gymnastics coach and writer, James left Newfoundland in Canada to pursue a Bachelor of Arts at Laval University in Quebec City and later a degree from the London School of Journalism.

Described as “sharp-witted, personable and disarmingly charming,” James was well-read, well-traveled and passionate about seeking out new experiences.

His career outside the UN included jobs in Togo, Benin, Vietnam and Italy, as well as in Toronto and Quebec City, where he lived for many years. James spoke English, French and Vietnamese.

One colleague remembered that “his travels were also occasions to show what an amazing photographer he was, which I strongly believe has to do with the way he saw the world. James was also very fond of nature and the great outdoors.”

To satisfy his passion for writing and music, he worked as a journalist, a disc jockey and frequently wrote music and travel reviews.

In New York, James worked in the Meetings Coverage Section in the Department of Public Information’s News and Media Division and then in the Communications Campaigns Service in the Department’s Strategic Com-

munications Division. He also worked with the team that drafted the “Report of the Independent Panel on Safety and Security of UN Personnel and Premises Worldwide.”

According to one colleague, “James’ sense of humor brought such joy at the end of a long day and our lunch dates were a bright spot in my weeks. James had an ability to be light and funny, but he also had a profound appreciation for the complexity of our lives and the lifestyle we had chosen as UN staff. He offered invaluable counsel to his friends and never shied away from being lovingly honest.”

Another recalled that James “always gave [his friends] the best advice. He was very fond of practical solutions and was incredibly helpful in solving complicated situations.”

A close friend said, “James made friends easily because he could always connect on some common ground. And people, no matter who they were, just seemed to like to talk to him.”

Another colleague noted, “I was with James when he found out he had been selected to go to Haiti on mission and I will never forget how happy and excited he was. He was good to the people and good for this planet. He had this great ability to really seize the day and live it fully and peacefully at the same time. He was very much appreciative of life and was making the most of it.”

James is survived by his mother and three sisters.