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## CNC-Japan News and Media

New UN's Secretary General on 14th December 2006



### General Assembly GA/10556

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**Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York**

Sixty-first General Assembly Plenary 78<sup>th</sup> Meeting (AM)

#### **GENERAL ASSEMBLY PAYS TRIBUTE TO SECRETARY-GENERAL KOFI ANNAN, ADMINISTERS OATH OF OFFICE TO SUCCESSOR BAN KI-MOON**

The General Assembly today paid tribute to Secretary-General Kofi Annan's "exceptional contribution to international peace and security...and his outstanding efforts to promote and protect human rights" during his 10-year leadership of the United Nations, and swore in his successor, Ban Ki-moon, who takes the helm of the world body on 1 January 2007.

To spirited applause and a prolonged standing ovation, the 192-member Assembly adopted by acclamation a resolution that took special note of Mr. Annan's many "bold" political, diplomatic and organizational initiatives, and his many important achievements, particularly with respect to the Millennium Development Goals, peace and security issues, the environment and United Nations reform.

The highlight of today's ceremony was the swearing in of Mr. Ban, of the Republic of Korea, as the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations. Assembly President Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa ( Bahrain) administered the oath of office from the rostrum, in the presence of the heads of the Organization's major bodies: the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and the Trusteeship Council.

In their respective statements to the diplomats and other dignitaries in the packed Assembly Hall, both Mr. Annan and Mr. Ban stressed the indissoluble links uniting security, development and human rights as the three pillars of the United Nations, without any one of which world peace will not be achieved. A former foreign minister, Mr. Ban, 62, was selected by the 15-member Security Council in mid-October and then quickly approved by the General Assembly as the first Asian head of the Organization in 35 years.

United Nations had remoulded and reoriented itself. It had become more transparent, accountable and responsive. It had begun to better address the needs of individuals worldwide. Despite many difficulties and some setbacks, "we have achieved much that I am proud of," he said of his decade-long tenure. "Yet our work is far from complete — indeed, it never will be," he said, adding: "It falls to my successor to carry forward the UN's valuable mission."

Saying that he was honoured to follow Mr. Annan, who's "courage and vision have inspired the world", Mr. Ban pledged to be a "bridge-builder" and do everything in his power to ensure that the United Nations lived up to its name and was truly united, "so that we can live up to the hopes that so many people around the world place in this institution, which is unique in that annals of human history".

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He said that one of his core tasks would be to breathe new life and inject renewed confidence into the “sometimes weary” Secretariat. “The good name of the United Nations is one of its most valuable assets — but also one of its most vulnerable,” he said, adding that the Charter called on all staff to uphold the highest levels of efficiency, competence and integrity, and so he would “seek to ensure that we build a solid reputation for living up to that standard.” He pledged to lead by example and to enhance morale, professionalism and accountability among the staff.

Earlier, Sheikha Haya said that Mr. Annan’s career had been unique. “He has risen through the ranks of the United Nations and devoted his life’s service to the Organization. So, today we are not only bidding farewell to the current Secretary-General, but also to one of the longest serving officials of the United Nations.” She stressed that Mr. Annan had guided the United Nations into the twenty-first century with vision and leadership. As a result, the multilateral system is stronger.

Her words were echoed by the representatives of the various regional groups, who eulogized Mr. Annan’s role in facing the many challenges confronting the world at large and the United Nations itself by promoting peace, humanitarian aid, human rights, development for the underdeveloped and wide-ranging reform for the world organization as epitomized by his 2005 report, *In Larger Freedom*.

### Background

The General Assembly met this morning to complete the appointment process of the next United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea — with the administration of the oath of office, and adopt a resolution paying tribute to outgoing Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

### Tribute to Kofi Annan

ABOUBACAR IBRAHIM ABANI (Niger), introducing the draft resolution Tribute to Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations (document A/61/L.48/Rev.1) and speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the draft was logical, in that, it both took tradition into account and it paid justice to reality. The Secretary-General had shown tremendous personal qualities and further, had helped the United Nations make vital progress towards modernization and democratization.

The Assembly adopted the resolution by acclamation.

General Assembly President Sheikha HAYA RASHED AL KHALIFA ( Bahrain) said that today’s adoption paid tribute to one of the most famous sons of Africa. Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s career had been unique — he had risen through the ranks of the United Nations and devoted his life to serve the Organization.

As Secretary-General over the past ten years, Kofi Annan had stood at the Organization’s helm, while it had become a more effective global actor and demand for its services had grown. Moreover, through setting out a far-reaching reform framework, he had made the Organization more relevant to the people of the world: a United Nations that lived to serve humanity and the principles of multilateralism.

His tireless efforts to promote peace had been rightfully rewarded in 2001, when he and the United Nations were recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize, she continued. Some of his outstanding achievements included the United Nations developing a clearer sense of purpose and priority — peace and security, development, human rights, were the Organization’s three pillars. Moreover, the Millennium Development Goals had provided the United Nations with a programme of action to eradicate poverty, thereby achieving a safer and fairer world for all, particularly in Africa. In addition, one of his lasting contributions was his emphasis on the interdependence present among today’s global challenges.

### Statements by Regional Groups

Mr. ABANI (Niger), speaking on behalf of the African Group, expressed the Group’s feelings of “pride

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and satisfaction” at Mr. Annan’s accomplishments. At this time of passing the torch to Mr. Annan’s successor, the African continent could take pride in having given one of its best sons to the service of the international community, where he had skilfully ushered the United Nations through a series of challenges, whether dealing with conflict, humanitarian disasters, or the scourge of HIV/AIDS. Africa was grateful to Mr. Annan for having raised its torch for the continent for a decade and was prepared to welcome him back home. The Group also welcomed incoming Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and pledged to support him towards promoting and protecting the cause of multilateralism.

HAMIDON ALI ([Malaysia](#)), speaking on behalf of the Asian States, said, at the end of Mr. Annan’s decade-long, illustrious career, the Group could say that he had steered the Organization through troubled waters with dedication and utter candour. He had shown to the world that, with strong will, no challenge was impossible and no obstruction was irremovable. While bidding farewell to Mr. Annan, the Asian Group would wholeheartedly welcome Secretary-General-designate, Ban Ki-moon, whose “steady hands” would now guide the Organization.

MIRJANA MLADINEO ([Croatia](#)), speaking on behalf of the Eastern European States Group, said that, as the first Secretary-General elected from the United Nations staff, Mr. Annan had been highly aware of the burden and responsibility he had to carry as the highest ranking civil servant in the world. He had pressed the cause of women, of the least developed countries and the plight of the hungry and defenceless around the world. He had also been an ardent advocate of human rights and development. He had also left the world with a blueprint for future international action and United Nations reform — *In Larger Freedom* — which had highlighted existing threats and warned of the need to address new and emerging ones, such as terrorism. She also expressed support for incoming Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

RUTH ELIZABETH ROUSE ([Grenada](#)), speaking on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, said this was a “bittersweet” farewell. She said that Mr. Annan would be remembered for the Millennium Declaration and its agreed Goals, which now served as the globally agreed objectives to achieve sustainable development for all by 2015. He would also be remembered for his reform-driven tenure, as well as his call for action to turn back the devastating spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. “We the peoples” would forever be the Organizations’ guiding watchwords and, if it continued in the path that Mr. Annan had paved, its noble objectives would most certainly be achieved. As the United Nations embarked on a new era, the Group would welcome Mr. Ban and assure him of its support.

HECTOR BONAVIA ([Malta](#)), speaking on behalf of the Western European and Other States Group, said that Kofi Annan had shown exceptional courage and determination in the pursuit of peace, development and human rights. He had been at the helm of the United Nations during a time of upheaval, uncertainty and frustrated hopes. New threats had also compounded unsolved problems from the past. The quest for peace and security, development, the elimination of poverty, and the promotion and protection of individual rights continued to be severe challenges. Those challenges made the objectives enshrined in the Charter as vital as they had been 60 years ago. “The job of Secretary-General is both daunting and exhilarating. The man who has occupied it so successfully for the last ten years is indeed impressive,” he added.

ALEJANDRO D. WOLFF ([United States](#)), speaking on behalf of the host country, said the United States saluted Mr. Annan for his decade of service. He had done much throughout his career to ensure that the United Nations better served its Member States, as well the millions of people who looked to the Organization to improve their daily lives. Mr. Annan had been honoured for his service with the Noble Peace Prize. He had also been at the forefront of the global combat against extremism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorist threats. He had been an ardent human rights advocate and done his utmost to ensure that the United Nations own human rights machinery was more responsive to the needs of the day. He had also done much to ensure that the United Nations was more available and attuned to the problems of the world’s most vulnerable populations, including the poor and disenfranchised, women and children. In all that, the United States was prepared to work with Secretary-General-designate Ban, particularly

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in the area of management reform and looked forward, as well, to achieving the shared goal of making the United Nations stronger and more effective.

DUMISANI KUMALO (*South Africa*), speaking on behalf of the “Group of 77” developing countries and China, said that, in one of the finest moments of the United Nations, under the leadership of Kofi Annan, one of the largest gatherings ever of world leaders had come to New York to agree on the Millennium Declaration. That document, which had given birth to the Millennium Development Goals, had captured the hopes of humankind for the future. It had also captured Mr. Annan’s objective of trying to give globalization a human face. With Mr. Annan at the forefront of the struggle for sustainable social and economic development, the Group of 77 had been proud to be among the “foot soldiers of General Kofi Annan”.

He said the Group of 77 was proud that Kofi Annan, a son of African soil, had led the Organization proudly. It was also proud that once again the continent of Asia had given the United Nations one of its sons to lead the Organization into the future. Ambassador Kumalo then read out a letter paying tribute to Mr. Annan, saying that, on 31 December, when his tenure ended, it would be the poor and underprivileged of the world, and the millions whose lives were withering away, ravaged by AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, “whose hearts would most be torn asunder”. The light of hope for the people of Palestine, living under occupation, would shine less brightly. He said Mr. Annan had always spoken softly, but his voice was heard the loudest when he spoke candidly to the powerful.

KIRSTI LINTONEN (*Finland*), speaking on behalf of the European Union, said her delegation would join others in expressing appreciation to Mr. Annan “the voice of the world’s nations”, for his deep and uncompromising dedication to the United Nations. He had been a driving force behind the global effort to achieve sustainable development and to promote and protect human rights for all. He had also led the effort to achieve broad reforms at the United Nations itself. He had had a clear vision of how the 60-year-old Organization could be changed to address the challenges of the modern century. She said Mr. Annan had also been a staunch advocate of the world’s marginalized women and children. The Union also thanked Ms. Nane Annan.

HAMID AL BAYATI (*Iraq*), speaking on behalf of the Arab States Group, said Mr. Annan had led the Organization in a manner that had allowed it to face up to the challenges of the present and prepared it to deal with the challenges of the future. His efforts had led to the creation of critical multilateral bodies that would be crucial to the Organization’s work in the coming years, namely the Peacebuilding Commission and the new Human Rights Council. He said that Mr. Annan had always tried to ensure the peaceful settlement of thorny issues and had struggled to arrive at an honourable and just solution to the Palestinian question and peace in the Middle East.

Africa should be proud of its son, he said. But the Arab group would stress that Mr. Annan, after his outstanding service at the helm of the United Nations, was now a son of the world. The Arab Group would also welcome Mr. Ban, who would carry with him the diversity and wealth of knowledge of the Asian region. That heritage would enable him to draw on the world’s diversity to build unity and eschew divisiveness. The Arab Group hopes that Mr. Ban’s tenure would see the birth of a Palestinian State.

ILEANA NÚÑEZ MORDOCHE (*Cuba*), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that, as an honourable son of the African continent, Secretary-General Kofi Annan had used the ancient wisdom of his peoples to seek solutions to the great problems of humanity. Her delegation wanted to recognize his contribution to international peace and security and his tireless efforts to achieve a better world. He would always be remembered for being an important and strong supporter regarding questions of development on the international agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals. While acknowledging the Secretary-General Kofi Annan’s humane sensitivity to tackle the HIV/AIDS pandemic, she was confident

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that the Organization would move ahead to become an even more effective body under the leadership of Secretary-General-designate Ban Ki-moon, to whom the Non-Aligned Movement pledged its full support and cooperation.

KOFI ANNAN, United Nations Secretary-General, said the United Nations had achieved much over the past ten years of sweeping change and great challenge, in which the United Nations had remoulded and reoriented itself to become more transparent, accountable and responsive. It had begun to better address the needs of individuals worldwide and had faced both emerging and familiar threats head on.

Further, he said, the United Nations had internalized the notion that development, security and human rights went hand in hand. There could be no security without development, no development without security and no sustaining of either without being rooted in the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Credit for those changes belonged first of all to Member States, he said. Member States had made far-reaching reform possible. Credit was also due to the exceptional men and women who served the United Nations, whose commitment and support, in both the field and at Headquarters, had made achievements possible. "For me personally", he added, the steadfast support and encouragement of both Member States and the United Nations community had "often made the difference between an impossible job and an exhilarating one". Friendship had sustained him over the years. It was the treasure he took with him into private life.

He said he departed the United Nations convinced that today's United Nations did "more than ever" and "better than ever". But the work was far from over and it fell to his successor to carry forward the valuable United Nations mission. Member States had chosen well. "Our Organization will be in safe hands," he said.

Congratulating the Secretary-General-designate, he noted the long and very distinguished career of Ban Ki-moon in international diplomacy and said "I can safely tell you that your most rewarding years lie just ahead." He wished his successor the strength and courage to "make the most of them".

### Oath of Office

Opening the oath of office ceremony, Assembly President Sheikha HAYA RASHED AL KHALIFA ( Bahrain) took the floor to say that Secretary-General-designate Ban Ki-moon had followed a long line of world class leaders, who all embodied the values and principles of the Charter in their own unique way and approach. The Secretary-General-designate had already signalled his commitment to lead the United Nations in a focused and action-oriented manner, working transparently, flexibly and honestly with Member States.

She stood ready to work closely with the Secretary-General-designate on the three challenges he set out as priorities. One, to continue with Secretariat reform by bolstering the integrity, professionalism and morale of staff. Two, to work in healing divisions and rebuild trust among Members States, the Secretariat and the public. Three, to strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of the Organization, to implement its mandates and increase the coordination of its various organs.

Assembly President Sheikha Haya invited to the podium the witnesses to the administration of the oath. They were Nassir Abdulaziz al-Nasser ( Qatar), the President of the Security Council; Ali Hachani ( Algeria), President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); Karen Pierce ( United Kingdom), President of the Trusteeship Council; and Han Seung-soo ( Republic of Korea), the President of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

Also invited to the podium were the 21 Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, representing Bhutan, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, France, Guinea, Haiti, Indonesia, Kuwait, Libya, Liechtenstein, Netherlands, Nigeria, Philippines, Russian Federation, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States and Zimbabwe.

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Finally, invited up to the podium were the Chairpersons of the main Committees. They were Mona Juul (Norway), First Committee (Disarmament and International Security); Tiina Intelmann (Estonia), Second Committee (Economic and Financial); Hamid Al Bayati (Iraq), Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural); Madhu Raman Acharya (Nepal), Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization); Youcef Yousfi (Algeria), Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary); and Juan Manuel Gomez Robledo (Mexico), Sixth Committee (Legal).

Once the oath of office was administered by the Assembly President, Secretary-General-designate Ban received congratulations from the witnesses, who then returned to their seats.

### Statement by Secretary-General-Designate

United Nations Secretary-General-designate BAN KI-MOON said he stood today before the world's nations mindful of the words of the oath he had just taken and that those sentiments — “loyalty”, “discretion” and “conscience” — together with the principles of the Charter, would be his watchwords as he carried out his duties. He said that he was all the more humbled to be succeeding Secretary-General Kofi Annan in what Mr. Annan had described as “the world's most exalting job”.

Honoured to follow in the footsteps of one whose tenure as United Nations chief had been marked by high ideals, noble aspirations and bold initiatives, he told Mr. Annan: “Your courage and vision have inspired the world.” Mr. Annan had also led the United Nations firmly into the twenty-first century and given the Organization new relevance to the people of the world. He noted that, because the Security Council had wrapped up the appointment process early, he had had the unprecedented privilege of more than two months' preparation before taking office — a time he had spent listening to and learning from his future colleagues in the Secretariat, Member States and the wider United Nations family.

He said that one of his core tasks would be to breathe new life and inject renewed confidence into the “sometimes weary” Secretariat. “The good name of the United Nations is one of its most valuable assets — but also one of its most vulnerable,” he said, adding that the Charter called on all staff to uphold the highest levels of efficiency, competence and integrity, and so he would “seek to ensure that we build a solid reputation for living up to that standard.” He pledged to lead by example and to enhance morale, professionalism and accountability among the staff.

He said that Member States needed a Secretariat that was dynamic and courageous, not passive or timid. The time had come to establish a new relationship between the Secretariat and the Member States: the old feelings of mistrust had gone on for too long. But ultimately, “we are all — Secretariat and Member States — accountable to ‘we the peoples,’” who would not long respect an Organization nor tolerate a Secretary-General, who catered to some while ignoring the desperate plight of others. “Together, we can — and must — do better. Our peoples and future depend on it,” he declared. By strengthening the three pillars of the United Nations — security, development and human rights — the United Nations family could build a more peaceful and prosperous world for future generations.

He said that his first priority as the Organization headed towards that goal would be to restore trust. He would seek to act as a harmonizer and a bridge-builder. He sought to become known to Member States and staff alike as a Secretary-General who was accessible, hard working and prepared to listen attentively. He would do everything in his power to ensure that the United Nations could live up to its name and be truly united, “so that we can live up to the hopes that so many people around the world place in this institution, which is unique in that annals of human history”. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs//2006/ga10556.doc.htm>

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