

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

2 February 2009

Excellency,

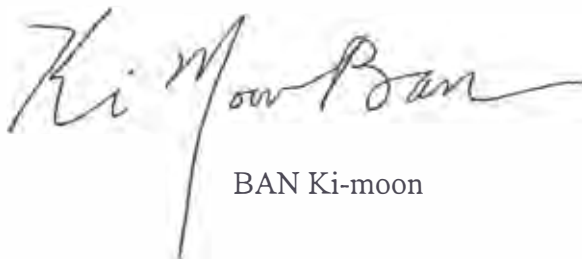
I am writing to thank you for receiving me and my delegation in Ankara on 16 January 2009.

I am relieved that, since we met, the fragile ceasefires in Gaza have held and there has been a full Israeli withdrawal. I have visited Gaza to see the grave situation there firsthand. The United Nations is leading efforts to ensure that immediate relief and recovery needs are addressed. I continue to press for full implementation of Security Council resolution 1860.

I was glad to have had the opportunity to be briefed by you on the efforts that you and your country have taken to find a durable solution to the Gaza crisis. Your role is crucial, given Turkey's unique position and contact with all the key interlocutors. I also appreciate your efforts to promote Palestinian national unity.

As we also discussed, I remain committed to the cause of a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, in accordance with Security Council resolutions and the Arab Peace Initiative. I highly appreciate the important role you have played in facilitating the indirect talks between Israel and Syria, and I hope that international efforts towards peace can be advanced in the future.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ki Moon Ban". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ki" and last name "Ban" being more prominent than the middle name "Moon".

BAN Ki-moon

His Excellency
Mr. Abdullah Gül
President of the Republic of Turkey
Ankara