

8 February 2011



## Secretary-General

### SG/T/2766

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#### ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN GERMANY, 3-6 FEBRUARY

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, accompanied by Madam Ban Soon-taek, arrived in Berlin in the early evening of Thursday, 3 February.

He had a working dinner with German President Christian Wulff. At a [press encounter](#) afterwards, the Secretary-General said that both men shared particular concern about the intimidation and restrictions on the international media and human rights groups in Cairo. "Let me be absolutely clear," he said, "this is outrageous and totally unacceptable. It must stop now."

On Friday, the Secretary-General met German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle [<http://www.unmultimedia.org/photo/detail.jsp?id=462/462574>], and said afterwards [<http://www.un.org/apps/sg/offthecuff.asp?nid=1712>] that they had discussed cooperation between the United Nations and Germany to secure peace, advance human rights, promote sustainable development and achieve progress in disarmament and non-proliferation. They also discussed Egypt and other hotspots in North Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Iran and the peace process in the Middle East.

On Egypt, the Secretary-General said that he sincerely hoped that the demonstration that day would take place without violence from any side. Now is the time, he said, for Egyptians to begin a process of peaceful and orderly transition leading to free and fair elections, respecting the will of the Egyptian people expressed so far through their demonstrations. "The United Nations stands ready to assist in this process," he said.

Asked what President Hosni Mubarak should do now, the Secretary-General said that it is important for the Egyptian leadership to listen more attentively and carefully to what the genuine wishes of its people are.

On Friday morning, Mr. Ban [spoke](#) on "The United Nations and the Modern World" at Humboldt University. His remarks touched on the current situation in Egypt, whose situation he described as having taken "a deeply troubling turn". "The violence and intimidation should stop," he said, "In particular, the restrictions on the international media, journalists and human rights groups are utterly unacceptable." He said that freedom of expression and assembly are basic human rights, and that these are the fundamental principles of democracy which have to be guaranteed. "These are essential democratic values." He renewed his call for calm and restraint, and he urged the Egyptian authorities to listen to the genuine voices of the people. (See press Release [SG/SM/13390](#))

The Secretary-General also [met](#) that morning with Frank-Walter Steinmeier, Leader of the Opposition, and with Hans-Ulrich Klose, Deputy Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and other members of the Committee. He briefed them on his priorities for 2011 and answered questions.

He then travelled from Berlin to attend the Munich Security Conference and a meeting of the Middle East Quartet.

His day began on Saturday with a [working breakfast](#) with Federal Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#)

at the Palais Montgelas. Mr. Ban congratulated Germany on its election to the Security Council, and said he counted on continued German support in tackling the many challenges facing the international community.

In his remarks to the Munich Security Conference, on the theme "Towards a Post-Nuclear Comprehensive Euro-Atlantic Security Community", the Secretary-General said that we do not know how the events in the Middle East will end "but they are driven, at bottom, by human insecurity: poverty, diminished or disappointed expectations, a deficit of democracy". (See Press Release [SG/SM/13392](#))

The Secretary-General attended a luncheon hosted by Germany Minister for Defence Karl-Theodor Freiherr zu Guttenberg, before attending a meeting of the Quartet. The Quartet members considered the implications of events in Egypt for Arab-Israeli peace and agreed to discuss this further in forthcoming meetings as a matter of high priority. The Quartet agreed to meet again at the level of Principals in mid-March on the way ahead. (See Press Release [SG/2168](#))

A series of bilateral meetings took place that day: with Baroness [Catherine Ashton](#), the [High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy](#); [Michèle Alliot-Marie](#), the [Foreign Minister of France](#); [Ahmet Davutoğlu](#), the [Foreign Minister of Turkey](#); and [Kevin Rudd](#), [Foreign Minister of Australia](#). The Secretary-General briefly met a number of other leaders and officials on the margins of the Conference.

On Sunday, 6 February, the Secretary-General held a press briefing with a small group of journalists before departing for New York, where he arrived mid-afternoon the same day.

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