

15 April 2010



Secretary-General

SG/T/2721

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

ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN KYRGYZSTAN, 3-4 APRIL

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon arrived in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, on Saturday morning, 3 April, accompanied by Madam Ban Soon-taek. This was the second leg of the Secretary-General's week-long visit to Central Asia.

After being received by the State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kadyrbek Sarbaev, the Secretary-General met with the President of Kyrgyzstan, Kurmanbek Bakiev. They discussed the role of Kyrgyzstan in the environmental security of Central Asia, sustainable development and the importance of achieving the Millennium Development Goals. They also discussed democratization and human rights issues, including the role of opposition, freedom of the press and free speech, Kyrgyzstan's membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council and the forthcoming Universal Periodic Review for the country.

The Secretary-General was then present when President Bakiev signed up for the "Say NO - UNITE" campaign. The Secretary-General said this was a concrete symbol of the Government's commitment to ending violence against women and girls. (See Press Release [SG/SM/12827](#))

After a working lunch with President Bakiev, the Secretary-General met with the Kyrgyz Prime Minister, Daniyar Usenov. He also heard a presentation on water and energy issues in the country with the participation of the Prime Minister and Cabinet members.

At a [joint press conference](#) with Prime Minister Usenov, the Secretary-General said he had just concluded very constructive discussions, covering a range of regional and global issues. He also stressed the importance of dialogue and regional cooperation for peaceful growth and development.

"For the UN, the protection of human rights is a bedrock principle. Quite frankly, recent events have been troubling, including those of the past few days," he added. The Secretary-General said he had urged President Bakiev to further promote the democratic achievements of Kyrgyzstan, including its free press. Media independence, tolerance for ethnic and religious diversity and a robust civil society are all fundamental to modernization, he told journalists.

That afternoon, the Secretary-General addressed the Jogorku Kenesh, the Parliament of the Kyrgyzstan. Noting that next year marks the twentieth anniversary of the country's independence, he said that the Jogorku Kenesh had helped lead the way to develop an independent State, and stressed the critical role of parliamentarians. "As parliamentarians, you engage with diverse constituencies and voices," he added, stressing the responsibility of parliament for building consensus, framing new policies, building social institutions and laws, and forging social justice. (See Press Release [SG/SM/12826](#))

After meeting with the heads of the United Nations organizations in the country and holding a town hall meeting with United Nations staff, the Secretary-General ended his day by attending a dinner hosted by Prime Minister Usenov.

The next morning, Sunday, 4 April, the Secretary-General left Bishkek for Nukus, Uzbekistan.

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