

24 June 2011



Secretary-General

SG/T/2795

United Nations

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

ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN URUGUAY, 14-15 JUNE

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, together with his wife, Madam Ban Soon-taek, began an official visit to Uruguay on Tuesday, 14 June.

He arrived in the capital, Montevideo, in the afternoon by ferry from Buenos Aires, Argentina. The Secretary-General's first meeting in Uruguay was with [President José Mujica](#). The Secretary-General [thanked](#) the President for Uruguay's support for United Nations priorities, including peacekeeping operations and United Nations reform.

He then held a [press conference](#), where he said that Uruguay's deepening of democracy and progress on human development is a true inspiration, citing the country's progress on meeting the Millennium Development Goals. The day ended with a [State dinner](#), where the Secretary-General was conferred the Medal of the Republic, Uruguay's highest honour.

The following morning, Wednesday, 15 June, the Secretary-General was interviewed by the newspaper *El País*, before [laying a wreath](#) at the General José Artigas monument in the Plaza Independencia in Montevideo.

He then visited the Headquarters of the [National School for Peacekeeping Operations](#), where he told peacekeepers that their efforts directly help millions of people by providing security and promoting reconciliation, clearing landmines and demobilizing combatants, and strengthening institutions and the rule of law, among others. (See Press Release [SG/SM/13644](#).)

This was followed by a visit to the [penitentiary at Punta de Rieles](#), a United Nations System Joint Programme site. In his remarks, the Secretary-General recognized that prison reform is a national priority for the Uruguayan Government, which is an example for the world. (See Press Release [SG/SM/13645](#).)

The Secretary-General then held talks with [Foreign Minister Luis Almagro](#), before meeting with [Parliamentary leaders](#).

He then addressed the Parliament in a [Session of Honour](#), saying that while Uruguay may be small on the map, it is large in influence around the world through its contributions to peacekeeping, United Nations reform in the field of development, and in promoting a world free of nuclear weapons. (See Press Release [SG/SM/13649](#).)

The Secretary-General wrapped up his visit to Uruguay on the evening of 15 June, departing for Brasilia, Brazil.

* * * * *

For information media • not an official record