

23 February 2007

Your Majesty,

At the invitation of your Government, I have asked Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to travel to Riyadh as my Special Envoy to convey my personal greetings and carry this message to Your Majesty.

In light of the critical role that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is playing in international affairs under your wise and able leadership, relations between the United Nations and the Kingdom have a special significance. I appreciated the opportunity to speak to Your Majesty on the telephone recently and I am grateful for your wise counsel and advice. I am looking forward to my forthcoming visit to Riyadh for the Arab Summit and would be honoured to have an audience with Your Majesty on the occasion of that visit.

I would like to convey my deep appreciation for the important contribution that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is making in fostering peace and stability in the Middle East, and more broadly in the Arab and Islamic worlds. I particularly wish to congratulate Your Majesty for bringing the Palestinian leadership together under your auspices. The agreement reached in the holy city of Mecca is vital for bringing about unity and stability in Palestine. Your efforts were welcomed by the Quartet on 9 February 2007, and recognized by the members of the Security Council during its open meeting on 13 February 2007. A clear priority for both Saudi Arabia and the United Nations is how to translate the Mecca Agreement into a sustainable ceasefire and credible peace process that leads to the establishment of a viable Palestinian State and the coexistence of all states in the region on the basis of mutual recognition and security. I greatly appreciate your efforts to move the Middle East Peace Process forward through the Mecca Agreement and the Arab Peace Initiative and I look forward to hearing your views on how this process can be energized further.

The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques
King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud
King of Saudi Arabia and Prime Minister
of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Riyadh

King of Saudi Arabia

Drafter: DPA

Proofread by: ER/SO/MAB

Approved by:

A. Authorized: 23/2

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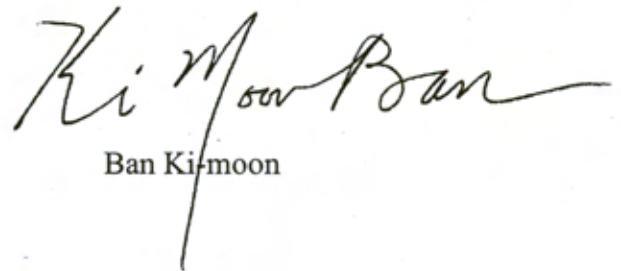
The situation in Lebanon also merits our collective attention. The United Nations is doing its best to assist the Lebanese authorities in the pursuit of those who committed the murder of Prime Minister Rafic Hariri and other terrorist acts in Lebanon since October 2004. A feeling of despair and hopelessness should not be allowed to prevail in Lebanon, and I commend your efforts to restore peace and stability to Lebanon. I would welcome your views on how the United Nations can help improve the situation in cooperation with all concerned.

Iraq is another issue of mutual concern. I wish to express my deep appreciation for the warm hospitality extended to my Special Representative for Iraq, Mr. Ashraf Qazi, who visited Saudi Arabia for consultations with your Government. I have read with deep interest Mr. Qazi's report of his visit to the Kingdom and your Government's assessment of the current situation. The deteriorating security, political, human rights and humanitarian situations in Iraq require our urgent attention. Under difficult conditions, the United Nations has been doing everything possible to implement its mandate under Security Council Resolution 1546 to assist the people of Iraq over the past four years. The promotion of national reconciliation between Iraq's different communities, as well as positive regional engagement between Iraq and its neighbours are top priorities. Saudi Arabia has an important role to play, and I look forward to further discussion on how Saudi Arabia can best contribute to these efforts.

The United Nations is also involved in several other parts of the Islamic world, including the situations in Afghanistan, Sudan and Somalia, and the views of Your Majesty on these situations are an important consideration to the United Nations. More broadly, in light of the important leadership role that the Kingdom plays in the Islamic world, Saudi Arabia can make a valuable contribution to promoting dialogue and understanding between different faiths and cultural spheres. I would therefore very much welcome your views on how such intercultural dialogue and understanding can best be promoted.

My forthcoming visit to Saudi Arabia will provide an excellent opportunity to discuss some of these issues with Your Majesty. I wish to take this opportunity once again to express my sincere appreciation for the valuable support that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has provided to the United Nations, as a founding member of the Organization.

Please accept, Your Majesty, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black 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