

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

14 May 2008

Excellency,

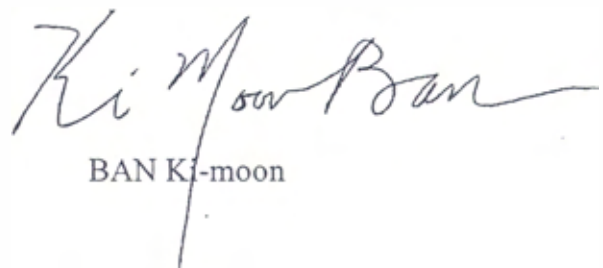
I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the warm reception and gracious hospitality accorded to me, my wife and my whole delegation, during my visit to Austria. My wife and I would also like to express our deepest appreciation to you and Mrs. Fischer for the exquisite experience at your summer residence in Mürzsteg.

I greatly valued our useful and interesting exchanges on a range of important issues, such as the situation in and around Kosovo, the Middle East, Darfur and the Millennium Development Goals. In addressing these complex topics, it is heartening to know that the United Nations and I as Secretary-General can rely on your active support. In this regard, I also hope to count on Austria's increasing commitment to our humanitarian efforts, particularly to fight the effects of the food crisis, which are mostly felt by the poorest of the poor in the world.

I highly appreciate the constructive role your country has assumed both regionally and globally in advancing the values and principles of our Organization as well as international and regional cooperation. In this regard, the exceptionally generous gift from your Government to the Vienna International Centre, the "M" Building, will greatly facilitate crucial and timely intergovernmental dialogue on the issues facing the international community.

Austria is an important partner to the United Nations and I look forward to a continuation of our close cooperation in the period ahead.

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



BAN Ki-moon

His Excellency
Mr. Heinz Fischer
Federal President of the Republic of Austria
Vienna