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Secretary-General

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ACTIVITIES OF SECRETARY-GENERAL IN ARGENTINA, 7-8 NOVEMBER

United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Madam Ban Soon-taek arrived in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on Wednesday, 7 November.

The Secretary-General had a working lunch with Argentina's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Jorge Taiana, at the Palacio San Martín, the historic building that houses Argentina's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Several Ministers of the Government attended the lunch, and many issues were raised, including: Argentina's peacekeeping contributions to the United Nations Missions in Haiti, Cyprus and Kosovo; the Argentine request for the Secretary-General's good offices on the Malvinas/Falklands dispute; the impact of climate change; and the challenges associated with reaching the Millennium Development Goals. They also discussed the "White Helmet" programme, an Argentine initiative that trains volunteers to assist in humanitarian crises. The Secretary-General stressed the need for increased contributions to the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund. Also discussed were the regional issues of inclusion and social inequality, the central themes to be addressed at the Ibero-American Summit in Santiago, Chile, the following day.

After the lunch, the Secretary-General left the Palacio San Martín to lay a wreath in front of the statue of Argentina's national hero, General José de San Martín, as the Granaderos regiments in traditional military uniforms stood guard. The Secretary-General then greeted members of the diplomatic community and waved to gathered onlookers.

Following the wreath-laying, the Secretary-General went to Argentina's National Congress to meet with Argentine Vice-President and Senate President Daniel Scioli, as well as with the President of the Argentine Congress's Chamber of Deputies, Alberto Balestrini. In off-the-cuff [remarks](#) to those gathered, the Secretary-General paid tribute to Argentina's contributions to peacekeeping, security, development and human rights. Stressing the importance of confronting climate change, he said, "We have the technology and the resources. But what is lacking is political will."

The Secretary-General then met informally with the United Nations country team. Following that meeting, he headed to Argentina's Casa Rosada to meet with President Néstor Kirchner and his wife, President Elect Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. They discussed the President Elect's economic programme, cooperation between the United Nations and Argentina in peacekeeping, and environmental issues. The Secretary-General and Madam Ban Soon-taek left the next morning for Santiago, Chile.

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