

UNITED NATIONS



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**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**  
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**REMARKS ON THE APPOINTMENT  
OF THE EIGHTH SECRETARY-GENERAL**  
**New York, 13 October 2006**

I would say that the process worked well because Member States were determined to achieve an early outcome, and because the winning candidate had exceptional qualifications.

Mr. Ban, I think everyone here recognizes the depth of your experience, the breadth of your connections, and your ability to operate effectively at the highest levels.

But as someone who has known and worked with you for several years, I think they will soon discover something more, if they do not see it already: a future Secretary-General who is exceptionally attuned to the sensitivities of countries and constituencies in every continent. A man with a truly global mind at the helm of the world's only universal Organization.

Mr. Ban, your early election will give us a head start in ensuring the smoothest possible transition. I would presume to give you only one piece of advice for when you take over next year: try to make full use of the unparalleled resource you will find in the staff of the Organization. Their commitment is the UN's greatest asset, and has been the surest source of strength for me in my work as Secretary-General.

More than 50 years ago, the first Secretary-General of the United Nations, Trygve Lie, used the following words in greeting his successor, Dag Hammarskjöld [*and I quote*]: "You are about to take over the most impossible job on Earth." [*End quote.*] While that may be true, I would say: this is also the best possible job on Earth.

There will be time to wish you well more fully as we reach the moment of transfer of authority at the end of the year. Until then, my colleagues and I will do all we can to assist you as you prepare for the road ahead.

As you ready yourself to take over, I wish you both strength and courage. You will need those attributes, but equally, you will need a healthy sense of humour -- which I know you possess in abundance. So don't forget to have fun along the way. I wish you the very best of luck.

Thank you very much.