



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
MESSAGE ON THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THE ATTACK
ON THE UNITED NATIONS IN BAGHDAD

19 August 2005

It is two years since the brutal terrorist attack on our headquarters in Baghdad. The trauma and wounds of that awful day remain a daily struggle for the families and loved ones of those who were lost, and indeed for all of us in the United Nations family. Survivors continue to struggle with their injuries, with some undergoing treatment even now. All of them continue to deal with harrowing memories and emotional scars. The question of justice lingers, too, as no-one has been held to account for this crime, offering yet another appalling example of the impunity that so often follows assaults on United Nations personnel around the world, be they peacekeepers, humanitarian workers or others.

The 19th of August will always be a date laden with sorrow for the United Nations -- and for me personally. It is an occasion to reflect on what those we lost endured, and how we can best honor their legacy. It is also a day to be thankful for the light they brought into our world. Our fallen colleagues, taken from us in the prime of their lives, embodied our Organization's ideals. They were courageous and unstinting in their devotion to helping people in impoverished and war-torn lands build better lives. Their commitment and achievements made all of us proud to work for the United Nations.

On this anniversary, I offer renewed condolences to the bereaved families and loved ones of those who gave their lives serving the United Nations. I pray that the pain of the injured will diminish. I commend the men and women of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq -- international and Iraqi staff alike -- for braving hardship and fear in their vital work for the country's transition. Finally, I pay tribute to all United Nations staff for absorbing this tragedy with resilience, and for carrying on, shaken but undeterred, with our global mission of peace.

Kofi A. Annan