

Ban Ki-Moon

Secretary-General of the United Nations



Biography

On 1 January 2007, Ban Ki-moon of the Republic of Korea became the eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations, bringing to his post 37 years of service both in Government and on the global stage.

Career highlights

At the time of his election as Secretary-General, Mr. Ban was his country's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade. His long tenure with the Ministry included postings in New Delhi, Washington D.C. and Vienna, and responsibility for a variety of portfolios, including Foreign Policy Adviser to the President, Chief National Security Adviser to the President, Deputy Minister for Policy Planning and Director-General of American Affairs. Throughout this service, his guiding vision was that of a peaceful Korean peninsula, playing an expanding role for peace and prosperity in the region and the wider world.

Mr. Ban has long-standing ties with the United Nations, dating back to 1975, when he worked for the Foreign Ministry's United Nations Division. That work expanded over the years, with assignments as First Secretary at the Republic of Korea's Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York, Director of the United Nations Division at the Ministry's headquarters in Seoul and Ambassador to Vienna, during which time, in 1999, he served as Chairman of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization. In 2001-2002, as Chef de Cabinet during the Republic of Korea's presidency of the General Assembly, he facilitated the prompt adoption of the first resolution of the session, condemning the terrorist attacks of 11 September, and undertook a number of initiatives aimed at strengthening the Assembly's functioning, thereby helping to turn a session that started out in crisis and confusion into one in which a number of important reforms were adopted.

Mr. Ban has also been actively involved in issues relating to inter-Korean relations. In 1992, as Special Adviser to the Foreign Minister, he served as Vice-Chair of the South-North Joint Nuclear Control Commission following the adoption of the historic Joint Declaration on the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. In September 2005, as Foreign Minister, he played a leading role in bringing about another landmark agreement aimed at promoting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula with the adoption at the six-party talks of the Joint Statement on resolving the North Korean nuclear issue.

Education

Mr. Ban received a bachelor's degree in international relations from Seoul National University in 1970. In 1985, he earned a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. In July 2008, Mr. Ban received an honorary Doctoral Degree from Seoul National University.

Prizes and awards

Mr. Ban has received numerous national and international prizes, medals and honours. In 1975, 1986 and again in 2006, he was awarded the Republic of Korea's Highest Order of Service Merit for service to his

country. In April 2008, he was awarded the dignity of the “Grand-Croix de L'Ordre National” (Grand Cross of the National Order) in Burkina Faso, and in the same month received the “Grand Officier de L'Ordre National” (Grand Officer of the National Order) from the Government of Côte d'Ivoire.

Personal

Mr. Ban was born on 13 June 1944. He and his wife, Madam Yoo (Ban) Soon-taek, whom he met in high school in 1962, have one son and two daughters. In addition to Korean, Mr. Ban speaks English and French.