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This profile is based on information available as of 6 September 2003 and does not reflect developments since that time.

**Kofi Atta ANNAN**  
(Phonetic: AN-en)

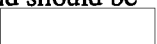
**GHANA**

*Secretary General, United Nations (since 1997)*


*Addressed as: Mr. Secretary General* 

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In 2001 the UN General Assembly (UNGA) overwhelmingly reelected Kofi Annan—only the seventh secretary general in the UN's more than 50-year history—to a second five-year term, the same year in which Annan, and the UN, won the Nobel peace prize for being "preeminent in bringing new life to the Organization." A devout multilateralist, Annan often says that problems such as war, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, disease, economic inequality, and environmental concerns are "problems without borders" and should be addressed in international forums. 

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Observers have noted that Annan has an uncanny ability to focus selflessly on the issues at hand and on the interests of the UN—his image is that of the consummate public servant. 

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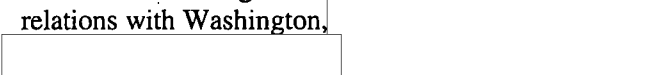
Before the 58th UNGA, the Secretary General began mulling over ways to restructure the UN.

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**Working Key Issues With Washington** 

Annan considers the United States the cornerstone of the UN and recognizes that he cannot afford bad relations with Washington. 

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 mindful to balance equities between Washington and other member states. Annan has been frustrated, however, by US rejection of some arms control treaties, the imbroglio over the International Criminal Court, and the US-led military action in Iraq, making it difficult for him to weigh in publicly on Washington's side on

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LP 03-106211  
6 September 2003

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controversial issues.

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Annan enjoys a close relationship with Secretary of State Powell—press reports note the two men speak on the phone weekly—and has met often with President Bush.

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In Iraq, the Secretary General is committed to giving the UN a meaningful role in postwar reconstruction. However, he wants to do so under what he views as more acceptable terms—he wants the division of labor between the UN and the Coalition clarified so that the UN would be seen as an independent authority in Iraq.

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Annan continues to rule out supporting a UN-commanded peacekeeping force for Iraq because he believes the Coalition is responsible for providing security as the “occupying force.” Nonetheless, the deteriorating security situation in Iraq—especially after a second bomb attack against UN offices on 23 September 2003—has concerned Annan, and on 25 September he ordered a temporary drawdown of UN personnel.

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In Liberia, Annan strongly supports the new UN peacekeeping mission and the simultaneous establishment of a UN political role to guide Liberia back to representative government. Annan had pressed Washington hard to contribute substantially to the multinational force and may be disappointed with the size of the US military commitment. However, his appointment of a US citizen, a former UN chief in Bosnia, as his special representative in Liberia shows he wants to continue working closely with the United States to stabilize Liberia.

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**Career and Personal Data**

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The Secretary General began his UN career at the WHO. He then served a six-year stint (1965-71) as personnel chief at the UN’s Economic Commission

in Addis Ababa. Annan left the UN in 1971 to earn a master’s degree in management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He returned to the UN a year later and served in posts in New York, Egypt, and Geneva. Annan returned to Ghana in 1974 to manage the Ghana Tourist Development Company. Displeased with the military government then in control in Ghana, he returned to the UN two years later to work as a deputy chief in the Office of Personnel Services. Annan then held a series of positions of increasing responsibility within the bureaucracy, culminating in his appointment as Under Secretary for Peacekeeping Operations in 1993. In that capacity he oversaw more than 50,000 troops and 13 missions, including Cambodia, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, and Rwanda.

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Annan, the only son in a family of four siblings, was born on 8 April 1938 near Kumasi, in southern Ghana. According to a magazine interview in the spring of 2003, Annan’s twin sister died in 1995 from unknown causes; the fate of his two older sisters is unknown. Annan’s father, an executive with a multinational corporation, was also an honorary chief of the Fante people, and through his mother, Annan is heir to the chieftaincy of the Akwamu—a native Ghanaian people. As a child, Annan attended Ghana’s oldest and most prestigious boarding school for boys, Mfatsipim, where he won acclaim as a track-and-field star. Annan studied at the University of Science and Technology in Kumasi (1958-59) before earning a degree in economics from Macalester College in Minnesota in 1961. He attended the Graduate Institute of International Studies in Geneva in 1962.

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The Secretary General reportedly enjoys hiking and dancing. In recent years, he appeared once on *Sesame Street*, resolving a conflict between the Muppets. Annan has an adult daughter, Ama, and an adult son, Kojo, from his first marriage. In 1984, Annan married Nane Lagergren. (Mrs. Annan has an adult daughter and a grandchild.) The Annans have become fixtures in New York society and were featured in the couples’ issue of *Vogue* magazine in February 2003. Annan speaks excellent English, French, and several African languages, including Twi and Fante.

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