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~~POOR ORIGINAL~~  
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Kurt WALDHEIM  
(Phonetic: VAHLThime)

Secretary General of the  
United Nations (since  
January 1972)

Addressed as:  
Mr. Secretary General



The quintessence of the professional diplomat, Kurt Waldheim is serving his second five-year term as UN Secretary General, having been re-elected by acclamation in December 1976. During his first term he earned a reputation for fairness and objectivity that contributed to his reelection. In September 1981 Waldheim publicly announced his availability for an unprecedented third term as Secretary General--his present term expires in December 1981. Waldheim believes that his main role is that of a mediator, and he resents being held accountable for events that are neither his responsibility nor within his limited powers to control. In his opinion, there is simply no alternative to the United Nations, and he is dedicated to its survival. He regards reducing the gap between the world's rich and poor nations as the greatest challenge to international statesmen. According to one of his close friends, Waldheim would like to be remembered in the history books for having brought about the beginnings of a constructive North-South dialogue. (C)

Performance and Personal Views

The indefatigable Waldheim thrives on work and usually puts in long hours at his job. In carrying out the duties and responsibilities of his office he has traveled throughout the world. Although he occasionally makes pessimistic pronouncements on the activities and future of the United Nations, he undoubtedly enjoys serving as Secretary General and is confident that he has done and is doing a good job. He is nearly as confident of his chances for reelection in 1981: a high-level UN official has said that Waldheim believes he has the United States,

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France and the United Kingdom "in his pocket," although he is less certain of the support of the Soviet Union and China. In May 1981 Waldheim visited Moscow, apparently at least in part to solicit support for his reelection, even though he was aware of Soviet displeasure over his attempts to involve the United Nations in considering the situation in Afghanistan since the Soviet invasion of that country. He traveled to China in June 1981, again probably in part to gain support for his candidacy; [ ] China has suggested that it would prefer someone from Africa, Asia or Latin America for the top UN post. (S)

#### Career and Personal Data

Waldheim, 62, has a doctorate in law from the University of Vienna. He was Austrian Permanent Observer to the United Nations during 1954-56. Ambassador to Canada from 1956 to 1960, Permanent Representative to the United Nations during 1964-68 and 1970-71, and Foreign Minister from 1968 to 1970. The picture of Old World gentility and charm, he is married and has three children. He enjoys skiing, fishing, gardening, and listening to classical music. He speaks fluent English. (C)

5 October 1981

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