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Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

Chapter I Introduction

1. As I come to the end of my second year at the helm of the United Nations, I am inspired by the commitment and energy of the people who serve this Organization; at the same time, I am acutely aware of the increasing weight of responsibility that lies on our collective shoulders. This past year we experienced a huge increase in the intensity of engagement across the entire spectrum of development, security, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues. The international community turned to us for assistance which ranged from helping victims of conflict and disaster and addressing the needs of the poor and hungry to restoring peace between warring parties and mobilizing the global community to address a new generation of global challenges like climate change and terrorism.

Chapter II Delivering results for people most in need

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B. Peace and security

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33. The United Nations was called upon to assist in the search for peace or to promote dialogue and reconciliation on multiple fronts, including in the Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Myanmar, the Middle East, Nepal, Sri Lanka, northern Uganda, the Central African Republic, Chad, Western Sahara and elsewhere. Our efforts took many forms. In addition to development assistance and humanitarian aid, we engaged in preventive diplomacy and peace negotiations, conducted peacekeeping missions and supported peacebuilding efforts in the aftermath of war.

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1. Preventive diplomacy and support to peace processes

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38. In the Middle East, I worked through the Quartet and with my envoys in the region to continue to push for comprehensive peace and security. An agreement to achieve the election of a president in Lebanon and indirect talks between Israel and the Syrian Arab Republic gave some reason to hope that the dynamics might change, and I continue to strive for the attainment of a peace agreement between Israelis and Palestinians as soon as possible.

C. Humanitarian affairs

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61. The United Nations and its partners have increased their efforts to address the humanitarian situations in Afghanistan, Iraq and the

Occupied Palestinian Territories where insecurity hinders access to many vulnerable people. For example, 12 months of restrictions imposed on the movement of commercial and humanitarian goods and people in and out of Gaza have had severe consequences for the well-being of the population, 75 per cent of whom rely on international assistance. Notwithstanding rising insecurity in Afghanistan, particularly in the southern provinces, the World Food Programme was able to reach close to 6.8 million beneficiaries in 2007.

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