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**New York, 8 March 2010 - Secretary-General's press encounter upon return from Chile [unofficial transcript]**

**SG:** Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is a great pleasure to see you.

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**Q:** Mr. Secretary-General, on the subject of another trip you are about to take, or will be taking in a couple of weeks to another conflict zone, the Middle East, can you tell us about where you are going to be going in the Middle East, I guess after the Quartet, and what your role is going to be, and how you see the launch of these so-called indirect negotiations that are resuming between the Israelis and Palestinians?

**SG:** As you know, during the last couple of months I have been extensively engaged with the Americans and Israelis and Palestinians and other Arab leaders, to facilitate the early resumption of negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Now, this Quartet meeting which will be held on 19 March in Moscow, will provide the Quartet principals a very good opportunity – first of all, to assess and encourage the earliest possible resumption of the proximity talks which will eventually, I hope, lead to direct negotiations between the parties. I will do my part, as Secretary-General, representing and reflecting the wishes of all the United Nations Member States.

I am considering visiting some countries in the region, but that will be announced soon. I am in the process of discussing this matter to engage myself and to facilitate this Middle East peace process.

Soon after that, I will participate in the League of Arab [States] Summit meeting which will be held in Sirte, Libya, on 27 March. There I will engage in bilateral or group meetings with the Arab leaders, so that both Arab leaders, and the United Nations, and all concerned parties can promote this peace process.

This afternoon, as you know, I am meeting Vice Prime Minister of Israel, Mr. [Silvan] Shalom.

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