

**Vienna, Austria, 22 April 2003 -  
Secretary-General's press encounter following meeting  
with Austrian President Thomas Klestil (unofficial transcript)**

[The President made opening remarks in German.]

**SG:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I've had a chance to have very good discussions with the President and to be able to thank him for the strong Austrian support for the United Nations and also for being such a wonderful host country to UN operations and its activities. As the President has indicated, we were able to discuss the situation in Iraq, the post-conflict Iraq, the UN's role as we move into the future, and we talked about the need for us to press ahead with the road map prepared by the quartet and try and resolve the long-standing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Obviously, there are other issues around the world which the international community will need to focus on, and therefore we also discussed the need for international cooperation and to seek out mechanisms for strengthening that cooperation to be able to cope with the issues of common concern.

**Q:** Mr. Annan, what are you planning to do to heal the rifts within the Security Council over the issue of Iraq?

**SG:** I think the Member States themselves are in touch and I am in touch with them at capitals and also at the Security Council in New York. What is important for us as we look forward to the future is that we try to focus on what can be done to help the people of Iraq, and to help Iraq to return to normalcy and become a member of the family of nations once again and that we try to heal the divisions which emerged before the war and focus on the constructive efforts we are going to make in Iraq. And as we focus on post-conflict Iraq and the international community's role, we should also bear in mind that we have other major challenges that require us to work together, and therefore the unity that is required to help us deal with Iraq is also needed in the other areas, whether it's Israel-Palestine, Afghanistan, the fight against terrorism, the fight against poverty, and so forth. So I hope we will all realise that we do need each other and that we need to come together and focus on what needs to be done.

/...