

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**MESSAGE ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY
OF THE TERRORIST ATTACK ON UN OFFICES IN ALGIERS
11 December 2008**

On this solemn anniversary, we pause and remember our colleagues who were killed in the atrocious terrorist attack against the United Nations in Algiers.

Seventeen UN staff died, and 40 were injured. Let us also remember that just 20 minutes earlier, terrorists struck the Algerian Constitutional Court, inflicting terrible casualties there, too.

I visited the site of the blast one week after it happened. Standing in front of the bombed-out UN building, I felt intense anger. I was outraged that terrorists had inflicted such brutality on the very people who were working for a better life for all Algerians.

I will never forget meeting the survivors and the families of some of those who died. I was overwhelmed by sadness at what had befallen their loved ones.

I was also inspired by the courage shown by many of the survivors in the aftermath of the attack. They worked tirelessly to search for their fallen colleagues in the rubble.

The victims took different paths to the United Nations.

Some grew up in Algeria, some came from as far away as Asia.

As in so many countries around the world, the UN presence possessed wonderfully varied skills and expertise. Some cared for refugees; others fought disease. Still others were drivers and support staff. Whatever their unique contributions, all were motivated by the same desire -- the desire that forms the very backbone of this Organization -- to serve the common, greater good.

Condolences poured in from around the world. People everywhere, within and beyond the United Nations community, shared our sadness and supported our resolve to continue our work despite the danger.

One staff member wrote that the names of our colleagues would be “carved on the monuments built in the minds and the hearts of people both inside and outside the UN who share a common dream for peace and justice”.

Another addressed the victims directly, writing: “The paths you trod will never become desolate nor your footprints blotted by the winds of time. For we all, with renewed zeal, march in the same direction, with the banner of faith”.

One year after the attack, we still feel the searing pain and irreplaceable loss of the lives cut short on that day.

Terrorists have taken these noble individuals from us. But they can never extinguish our hopes for global harmony nor our conviction that working together is the only path to a better world.

May our dear, departed colleagues rest in peace.

May their friends and families find solace in the knowledge that we will always remember their sacrifice.

And let us all be more determined than ever to honour their memory by continuing their work for peace and development, in Algeria and wherever people in need turn to this Organization and its staff for help.