

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S INTERVIEW WITH CNN.
Sunday, 15 November, 1998**

Q. Mr. Secretary, first of all, thank you very much for joining us. What's your initial reaction to President Clinton's comments regarding this crisis?

A. First of all, I think he was very statesman like, the statement was good, very strong, very balanced. I think that the entire International Community can subscribe to what he said. He did indicate what he expects of Iraq now that Iraq has decided to comply and listed a series of points, including unfettered access for the inspectors. I understand there have been some questions in Iraq as to whether this is acceptable or not, but I don't see why they should have any problem because everything the President listed forms part of the resolutions and the M.O.U. They wrote Saturday accepting, so I don't think there should be any problem.

Q. Do you expect Iraq to accept with what President Clinton said or at least to go along with the Security Council resolutions and your appeals to them?

A. Yes, and it's not just President Clinton. I have been in the Council for almost nine hours in the past few days and I am going back this afternoon. All the Council Members want compliance on the ground. There have been quite a lot of words, Iraq has indicated it accepts. Now it's the time to test on the ground and all the Member States are keen to seek compliance and to seek action on the ground. And therefore I think they are all with President Clinton on this.

Q. Do you believe that inspectors should have the right to go wherever they want as soon as they are back in Iraq?

A. I think that the resolution and the M.O.U makes it quite clear that they should be given access and the Iraqi Government in this letter accepts the resolution and the M.O.U. I think that the inspectors should be allowed to do their work and if Iraq were to cooperate with them and work with them to get the inspections over, then they are going to see light at the end of the day, sooner rather than later.

Q. Your role was essential in easing the last crisis in February. But yet do you believe that we are right back to where we were when you signed the Memorandum of Understanding with President Saddam Hussein?

A. It is, it seems like a repetition of what happened in February. This one seems to be more complicated than February. And in February, after the agreement there was compliance there for a while and then we were back at the scene in October, in August sorry. I hope this time around we will have sustained cooperation and sustained effort and we will not be back to this because I think all the Member States do not appreciate these periodic crises and would want to see sustained cooperation with UNSCOM.

Q. Is the United States justified in saying that next time it will act alone and not go the Security Council?

A. Well, I am going back to the Council this afternoon and this issue will probably come up, but what I can say is that there is a lot of frustration and a lot of displeasure with the inspections, with how the inspections are going in, that they have not had sustained cooperation and some governments have made it clear that next time around there may not even be time for diplomatic appeals. Thank you.

Q. Just a final question, your role in all of this, as the final hours play out, with President Clinton speaking to you and your dealing also with the Iraqis, were you the key person in the middle? Were you a bargainer for both sides? How do you see your role? How does it play out in the final hours?

A. Well, my role wasn't major. I think you may say that I facilitated things but the decisions and the major roles were played by the President Clinton, the Council Members, Prime Minister Major and all the capitals, I mean Prime Minister Blair sorry, Prime Minister Blair, President Clinton, all the capitals, Russians, the French, everyone was active in trying to get Baghdad back on board. So I see my role more as a facilitator than a major player.