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CHARLIE ROSE, HOST: Welcome to the broadcast. Tonight, an exclusive conversation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations Kofi Annan.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KOFI ANNAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL, UNITED NATIONS: I hope it will be said when they look at the record that not only did I try to in my own reform efforts make the U.N. an effective instrument, but I have put the United -- I have put the individual at the center of everything the U.N. is about. When you look at our program, it is about the individual -- his dignity, his health, education of the child, how to protect them from infectious diseases, how do we assure collective security. And so I hope - and I hope it would also be said that the U.N. is functioning better than it did 10 years ago.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CHARLIE ROSE: The secretary-general for the hour. Next.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

CHARLIE ROSE: Kofi Annan is here. He is the seventh secretary-general of the United Nations. Today the U.N. faces some of its most difficult challenges, from Darfur to Iran. U.N. missions all over the world are fighting poverty, the spread of disease, terrorism and nuclear proliferation. The organization has also faced mounting pressure to reform. Earlier today, Secretary-General Annan presented proposals for broad overhaul of U.N. management. Here is a part of what he said.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KOFI ANNAN: My assessment is, if I may put it bluntly in one sentence, that in many respects our present regulations and rules do not respond to the current needs and, indeed, they make it very hard for the organization to conduct its work efficiently or effectively.

I have no hesitation in saying that the organization is more efficient and effective than it was 10 years ago. It delivers more than ever, even though the rules make it difficult and has been found to be cost-effective compared to others engaged in similar activities.

More than 70 percent of our 10 billion annual budget now relates to peacekeeping and other field operations compared to about half of the budget, less than half that size, 10 years ago.

In the 16 years since the Cold War ended, we have taken on more than twice as many new peacekeeping missions than in the previous 44 years. Spending on peacekeeping has quadrupled.

Just as this building, after 60 - after 56 years of ad hoc repair and maintenance now needs to be fully refurbished from top to bottom, our organization, after decades of piecemeal reform, now needs a

thorough strategic refit, one that can only be achieved if there is a sustained commitment to see it through at all levels of leadership.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

CHARLIE ROSE: Kofi Annan is currently serving his second and final term. Tonight, we look back at his tenure and we look forward to the role of the United Nations in the coming years. I am pleased to have him back at this table for a conversation that is -- follows on one in 1997 when you first took over, and later in 2000. So welcome back to the table.

KOFI ANNAN: Thank you very much.

CHARLIE ROSE: What's in this reform packet that I hold here ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... that you delivered to the delegates today?

KOFI ANNAN: I think in - in this reform proposal that I put forward to them, mainly focusing on management, which is subset of a wider reform proposal which I gave to the member states in September, when the heads of states came to review it. And they gave us much notice and asked me to make concrete proposals on how the management can be reformed and can be brought in line with today's reality.

The U.N. started as a very sedentary civil service, convening meetings, servicing conferences. But now we have really become a truly operational organization. We have 85,000 people deployed around the world in peacekeeping operations. We have thousands working in humanitarian areas in countries around the world. We are active in working with governments in strengthening their human rights. We have people on the ground. We've organized over 100 elections with many countries. And yet the rules and the practices that we have were set to deal with sedentary ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Right.

KOFI ANNAN: ... civil servants. So we need to adapt all this to fit the new realities that we operate in.

CHARLIE ROSE: The largest part of your budget is peacekeeping.

KOFI ANNAN: The largest budget is peacekeeping.

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes. You're recommending outsourcing and a whole other ...

KOFI ANNAN: We're asking ...

CHARLIE ROSE: ... range of things.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes, we are asking the member states, who have been a bit more conservative on these issues, to give us -- at least allow us the flexibility to study it and make recommendations to them. Obviously, there will be have to be lots of consultations with them - with my - with the staff and put forward concrete and detailed proposals, but we think we need to be allowed the flexibility of looking at other methods of delivery which other institutions have had to consider. But it will require intensive studies to identify which are the core issues we need to maintain, issues of quality control and a whole series of issues. So we are some ways from it yet.

CHARLIE ROSE: You have already made some management changes.

KOFI ANNAN: That's correct.

CHARLIE ROSE: Mark Malloch Brown went from your chief of staff to become deputy secretary-general.

KOFI ANNAN: That's correct. My deputy, Louise Frechette, who has been with me for the last eight years and has done a brilliant job, is going back home to Canada. So I've asked Mark to take over from her. She is going to be a tough act to follow, but I'm sure Mark will do well.

CHARLIE ROSE: How far would you have liked it to have gone that it didn't go? What couldn't you get in terms of what you learned at the summit in September, the kinds of reforms that you were unable to put together here? How far does it go in terms of where you wanted it to go?

KOFI ANNAN: I think there were - there are areas where I thought we could have done much more. There were areas where I was genuinely disappointed that the member states could not agree on. One key area was nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The outcome document the member-states agreed on did not have one line on it. And yet it's one of the most critical issues we are dealing with, whether it's - whether it's discussions over Iran or North Korea or the concern that other countries may want to acquire nuclear capability. So I was very disappointed on that.

On the Human Rights Council, which is now before the members ...

CHARLIE ROSE: The hot issue today.

KOFI ANNAN: It's - it's a very hot issue. I would have preferred if the member states had been able to take a decision in September for us to move ahead, but they did take the decision in principle and asked us to work out the details. And this is what we have done. Under the leadership of General Assembly President Eliasson, I think the membership have come up with a proposal, which is not exactly what I wanted, but it is a good proposal. It has very credible elements in it that makes it much better than the current Human Rights Commission.

CHARLIE ROSE: The United States is opposed to that because they say it doesn't go far enough?

KOFI ANNAN: Yes. I think they are disappointed that it did not -- I had indicated that to be a member, you need two-thirds of the membership to support you, to vote for you. Here we are asking for absolute majority. That is 97. Two-thirds majority would have been 120. But even the absolute majority of 97 is much better, much higher threshold than the current situation. With the current situation, the members are appointed by the Economic and Social Council, which has a membership of 54. And we tend to do it by regional slate. And so if a region puts forward a country, they more or less get through automatically. But now under this proposal, we have to vote on each country individually. And they have to garner 97 seats -- votes, and that's not going to be easy if the country doesn't have a good record on human rights.

CHARLIE ROSE: You have been in the midst as secretary-general for 10 years ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... of this idea of reform. Just take me inside, and for our audience, why is it so hard? What's on the issues? What is the conflict? What is needed?

KOFI ANNAN: First of all, you're dealing with 191 sovereign states. One parliament or one Congress or Senate is difficult enough -- people from the same country who basically share the same ideology, share the same vision. Multiply that by 191 and you get them in one room ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: ... and say, let's discuss our common vision. Forget your individual national interests and look at the larger good.

CHARLIE ROSE: It goes against human nature.

KOFI ANNAN: It takes -- it goes against human nature and takes lots of work and lots of convincing. There is a sort of tension between the General Assembly and the Security Council, because you the ladies and gentlemen of the media write all the time about the Security Council, hardly anything about the General Assembly, and they feel that the General - the Security Council is becoming more and more powerful to the detriment of the General Assembly, so they tend to sometimes want to protect their preserve, and then show that the General Assembly is as effective and as influential as the Security Council. So it doesn't help when you are setting up, let's say, a new commission for -- peace-building commission, the peace-building commission and Security Council demands that five of the new seats must automatically go to the permanent five.

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: They see it as a power grab. They see it as a group of nations with power, but who are insatiable. They always want. And that of course sometimes leads to tensions. And so when you put forth other proposals ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: They wonder who is going to benefit.

CHARLIE ROSE: Exactly. So developing nations say wait a minute ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... all these powerful nations, if they are so much in favor of reform, maybe it's good for them and not good for us.

KOFI ANNAN: There's quite a bit of that debate. And also the other problem you have is you have a situation where they also feel that those who have privileges want to hold on to it and never want to let go or let in new ones. This comes up very much when you discuss Security Council reform. Rather than opening up and letting out, they want more power. So then you get into this sort of a tense situation, but ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Someone said to me once ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CR ... about you, a friend of yours, said to me if you want to understand you, understand your career in the U.N., but also understand Ghana -- and it was true for you and it was true for Nelson Mandela ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... in South Africa. It's different places...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... but that you come out of a place in which tribal councils had been important.

KOFI ANNAN: Important, yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: And what was important in tribal council leadership was to be - listen ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... to try to hear every view ...

KOFI ANNAN: That's correct.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... to try to be a compromiser, to try to be more than you can be to all sides. Is there some truth in that?

KOFI ANNAN: I think there's some truth in that. In the African culture, there's lots of talk and then lots of listening.

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: If there is a problem, you may see them under a big tree having discussions. If there's a problem to be solved, they will talk and talk and talk, and if they don't find a solution today, they will go to sleep and start the next morning to discuss it.

So they - they listen to each other. They try to speak from their own experience, and - and often try to avoid speaking out of anger or commenting or criticizing what others have said but to speak from their own experience and to - and to work with each other. And in a way, you have a bit of that in the international and the U.N. system.

I was at Princeton the other day. We had what we call the secretary-general's collegium of university presidents. We meet once a year. And we were discussing some issue. And I pointed out to them that when a scientist sets out to prove a hypothesis, he may go through a hundred experiments. Ninety-nine times he may fail; only one will be right. And he comes up with an invention and is creative. And the 99 times he failed is not considered waste, but really is creative redundancy.

CHARLIE ROSE: It was part of that getting there.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah. And so, we - we debate a lot and talk a lot in the U.N. and in the international system. In the end, we come up with conventions or a resolution, action on some situation around the world. That talk and those series of meetings and conferences is our creative redundancy. You know, it's not as waste as one tells so, because how else - how else could you get governments to agree? Who is going to impose anything on them without that kind of discussion and understanding and bringing them together? Whether it's reform or some other issue.

CHARLIE ROSE: Do you wish when you look back that you had been more of a CEO and tougher and more ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah, yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... demanding?

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah. I'm not sure the CEO model entirely applies to the U.N.

CHARLIE ROSE: And to the job of secretary-general.

KOFI ANNAN: To the job of secretary-general given the constraints on the job, and often I've been asked, are you a secretary or a general?

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes, exactly.

KOFI ANNAN: And I often told them I have to be both. There are times when I have to be a general and lead, and there are times when I have to be secretary and serve the common good. But there comes a time when your voice must be heard and the times when you must lead in front of rally the troops.

CHARLIE ROSE: How have you held what is a remarkable disposition? I know people said they've never seen you angry. Including your wife. Is it because it is the nature of the responsibility?

KOFI ANNAN: It is partially a nature of responsibility. It's also partially temperament and also maybe over the years understanding that anger doesn't really get you anywhere. I mean, I'm - I'm human and there are times when I get irritated and - and angry, but I don't explode into - in the negotiations or a situation. Those who know me well can see it in my eyes.

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: That's right.

CHARLIE ROSE: What would they see? Not exactly pleasant.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah. Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: One thing in the report, and back to the CEO thing, and this notion of how your own, you know, whether you are in fact conflict-averse. Do you think that's a fair characterization? Conflict-averse?

KOFI ANNAN: I wouldn't say I'm conflict-averse, but I don't go out seeking conflicts. If I have to face a conflict, I will face it. But I don't go out provoking conflicts or seeking it. But when I have to face a conflict, I will - I will do it. But what is important is that sometimes people do not realize that you don't have to be confrontational or aggressive to get to where you want to be or you want to get people to do what you believe is right. You know, this is somebody who defined the art of diplomacy is getting the other person to do what you want them to do. But that does not -- in other words, it's convincing them, persuading them ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: ... not pounding the table or threatening them.

CHARLIE ROSE: Somebody once said that the art of negotiation is getting the other person to do what you want to do and believe it was their idea.

KOFI ANNAN: Absolutely.

CHARLIE ROSE: There - there is the relationship with the United States. Most people say that this -- U.N. and the United States cannot in the end be in conflict in a significant way. Is that fair?

KOFI ANNAN: I think it is fair that the U.S. is an important member - member state of the organization. But the U.N. has its own resolutions and agenda, which guides the secretary-general and the staff. And there are times when we are in conflict, when we are in conflict as to what the U.S.' goals are and what the goals of the organization is.

CHARLIE ROSE: And how would you characterize it today? Because -- let me just make this point.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: About seven -- a week or so ago, you went down to see Condoleezza Rice, the secretary of state.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: And I'm told you saw the president as well.

KOFI ANNAN: I saw the president as well and his whole team.

CHARLIE ROSE: Yeah. Is there a change, in your judgment, between today and, say, in the immediate post Iraq time?

KOFI ANNAN: Yes. There is a difference. Post-Iraq time was -- introduced tense relations between the organization and the administration.

CHARLIE ROSE: And the secretary-general?

KOFI ANNAN: And the secretary-general, because the secretary-general did not support the war. The administration - the organization did not support the war. The Security Council did not. So there was a bit of a tension, even though we have had other situations where the Security Council had not voted for action and we had managed to bring the member states to work together. Kosovo was one, you know. Even though there was even competitive deployment with Russia, in the end, everybody came together and we are all working harmoniously in Kosovo until today.

Iraq was - was different. The tensions and emotions were very high. And the administration initially did not open up the way it did in Kosovo or Afghanistan for that matter. But things are different. I work well with the Secretary of State Rice and with the president himself. And ...

CHARLIE ROSE: And they've changed their attitude in your judgment, at least in expressions to you about the role of multilateral organizations and unilateralism versus multilateralism.

KOFI ANNAN: Well, we don't discuss it in those terms, but ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Tell me what terms you do discuss it in.

KOFI ANNAN: But - but - but let me - let me - let me say that ...

CHARLIE ROSE: You don't discuss it in terms like, Mr. President, you were wrong when you said this. And I would like ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah. No, we don't discuss it in those terms, but it is - it is just clear that we are working much more closely on a whole range of issues, from Palestine to Darfur to the Democratic Republic of Congo to Iran and other issues, and Iraq.

CHARLIE ROSE: And tsunami relief.

KOFI ANNAN: Tsunami relief, and on this ...

CHARLIE ROSE: And HIV.

KOFI ANNAN: And lots of things which has brought us together.

CHARLIE ROSE: And -- go ahead. I'm sorry.

KOFI ANNAN: And I think I must say that throughout all this, my relationship with the president and Secretary Rice have been very correct, very good. We - we -- the press sometimes thought we were constantly fighting, but we haven't had the sort of acrimonious sort of relationship.

CHARLIE ROSE: When you told a BBC reporter that the war was illegal, did you hear from him?

KOFI ANNAN: Yes, I did. It's not something that the administration will be pleased about. And I think -- I mean, they knew my position. I had indicated way before than the war that to go to war without consent of the Council...

CHARLIE ROSE: Without the second resolution.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah. Would not be in conformity with the security - with the charter, will not be in the conformity with the charter. But I didn't -- when I said that, I didn't want to start a new doctrine or anything. But I think we put it behind us, and we've moved on.

CHARLIE ROSE: What about Mr. Bolton? What's your relationship with him?

KOFI ANNAN: We have good working relations with him. In fact, I saw him today. He was in my office with a group of six or seven congressmen and women led by Congresswoman Boxer. And we are ...

CHARLIE ROSE: He's on a different part of the political spectrum than ...

KOFI ANNAN: That's correct. That's correct. But we had a good discussion on Darfur and on reform, particularly on the human rights, explaining to the congressmen and women the improvements I see in the new Human Rights Council. And why I think it should be supported.

CHARLIE ROSE: Are you making any progress on that?

KOFI ANNAN: Well, the president is in very serious negotiations and consultation, in serious consultations. He's trying to bring everybody, particularly the U.S. onboard. The next few days will be critical, and we'll have a better sense of what progress is being made.

CHARLIE ROSE: John Bolton says he wants to reform the U.N. You know, are you two on a wavelength?

KOFI ANNAN: Well, I think if the U.N. can be reformed, if member states work together, it takes like-minded member states who are working together with - with each other and with the secretary-general to reform the organization. And so, I'm very pleased with any ambassador who states that he is interested in reforming the U.N., and that implies working with other - other member states to get results, because no ambassador can do it alone. There are 190 of us, there are 191 ambassadors, and each ambassador must know that there are other 190 like him that he has to deal with and convince.

CHARLIE ROSE: Let me talk about three or four issues that are important to you and to the U.N. The Russian foreign minister is in Washington today, talking to Secretary Rice and others about what they can do with respect to Iran.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: There is a meeting in Vienna on Thursday. Is Iran coming to the Security Council as an issue?

KOFI ANNAN: I will be seeing the Russian foreign minister tomorrow. He's coming to Manhattan to see me. So I will have the chance of discussing this issue with him. The discussions between the Russians and the Iranians seem to have not - they've been inconclusive, although there seems to be some indication that they may still continue.

CHARLIE ROSE: There always seems to be that. They walk out and say we can't agree ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... and then somehow the next day ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... somebody says, well, maybe we can talk more.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: The same thing was true with the Europeans.

KOFI ANNAN: I think if - if they are not able to resolve it within the Atomic Agency in Vienna, it will definitely come to the Security Council. But, of course, ideally it should be resolved within the - within the IAEA, because it is an organization that is monitoring the performance. It's an organization that has a competence and if - and if all else fails and they exhaust their possibility of dealing with it, then it will be referred to the U.N. It's interesting last time around it was not a referral; they informed the Security Council. You have three - three words: Report or inform.

CHARLIE ROSE: Right.

KOFI ANNAN: The Security Council, which means that the issue is still being dealt with by the agency, and the Council can - have -- can use its influence to steer things in the right direction. When they formally refer it to the Council, then implication they have exhausted all possibility of resolving the issue within IAEA and that the Council then has to take it over and take appropriate measures.

CHARLIE ROSE: And consider sanctions and things like that.

KOFI ANNAN: Whatever measures that it deems appropriate.

CHARLIE ROSE: So you're suggesting to me it may not be a referral? It may be what?

KOFI ANNAN: It may be a report.

CHARLIE ROSE: Yeah.

KOFI ANNAN: It may be information, but this is something that the member states are discussing in Vienna. And it all depends on how they view the report that Mr. ElBaradei has placed before them. The report doesn't have a smoking gun, as one will say, but it does raise concerns and worry that there are certain areas of clarity that is required and they need the Iranians to come clean and give them additional information so that they can clarify these outstanding questions.

CHARLIE ROSE: Lots have been written and said about this, but my impression is that Mr. ElBaradei said I believe that they're -- are intent on a nuclear program, and has suggested that - that his -- he's changed his opinion a bit about what he thinks their intentions are.

KOFI ANNAN: I think we -- the member states will have to base (ph) themselves on the report that's put before them, you know.

CHARLIE ROSE: And that will come not until after they meet on Thursday.

KOFI ANNAN: Well, he - they've got now. He gave them one last week. And they - and they are looking at that. And I'm sure over the period, he will give them additional reports.

CHARLIE ROSE: This is a very interesting thing about -- I mean, you know, there are two things that test -- there are three or four things that test the relevancy of the United Nations. One is peacekeeping, you know. And that's very, very difficult. Disaster relief is another; that's very, very difficult because of resources ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... and that kind of thing. Here you wonder what - what can the United Nations do? And is this a case where you can have a veto in Security Council, where you can get Russia and Europe, can all agree and the United States, that they want to impose whatever they think ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... is the appropriate thing to do -- people worry about sanctions, who will be heard...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... but what if China vetoes it because China has economic connections ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... with Iran?

KOFI ANNAN: A country with - with -- all that you need is one veto. And that's it. If a permanent member votes against it, then you cannot move forward.

CHARLIE ROSE: Is that a good idea?

KOFI ANNAN: It sounds as if you would want to take the vetoes away. I think there are lots of member states who would applaud you ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: ... but there are others who would be extremely angry with you...

CHARLIE ROSE: And ...

KOFI ANNAN: ... if you were to take the vetoes away.

CHARLIE ROSE: All of those permanent members ...

KOFI ANNAN: Exactly.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... of the Security Council ...

KOFI ANNAN: Exactly.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... would be angry about it. Is that right? Because ...

KOFI ANNAN: Absolutely.

CHARLIE ROSE: Nobody wants to give up power.

KOFI ANNAN: No, no, no. Privileges are not given up.

CHARLIE ROSE: Exactly. Not easily. Go ahead.

KOFI ANNAN: It's -it's a very difficult situation, this Iranian issue. I think obviously they are not being deprived of the right to peaceful uses of nuclear power or power generation and all that. But the - the clarity that the Atomic Agency and the world is seeking is that they do not have ambitions to weaponize.

CHARLIE ROSE: Right.

KOFI ANNAN: Weaponize the nuclear capacity. And the sense is that they need to really give the international community confidence and assurance that they are not going in that direction. The Russian offer to help them ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Enrich the uranium on their territory.

KOFI ANNAN: On their territory.

CHARLIE ROSE: On their soil.

KOFI ANNAN: On their soil. It was something that everyone hoped may be -- act as a good compromise, but the Iranians have indicated that even if they go that route, they may want to continue their own research at home, which implies a desire for the know-how. But this is at the center of the issues that they are discussing now, and I hope they will find some compromise in Vienna to be able to resolve the issue. Quite honestly, I think the ideal solution would be a negotiated one. And I hope they would all press ahead in good faith and try and find a solution.

CHARLIE ROSE: Well, the Iranians and their nuclear negotiator has pretty much threatened that if it goes to the U.N., all bets are off and we're going full speed ahead.

KOFI ANNAN: I know.

CHARLIE ROSE: That doesn't make things easy, does it?

KOFI ANNAN: It -- it doesn't. But what I'm not -- well, and let me stop here. I was going to say something that I shouldn't say.

CHARLIE ROSE: Please resist that urge whenever it comes ...

KOFI ANNAN: Comes, yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... not to say something, please, on my behalf.

Two things. One, the United States just made an agreement with the government of India. Iran is a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. India is not. The United States comes over to India and says, we want good relationships with you. You've behaved well even though you're not part of the NPT.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: And so, we're going to sign it and we are going to go to the Congress ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... and recognize you as a nuclear power, with the understanding that it will open up all kinds of technology, all kinds of fuel for you, and you can continue your military program ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: Does it make it easier or more difficult for the deal with Iran?

KOFI ANNAN: It does complicate the discussions with Iran and the deal with Iran.

CHARLIE ROSE: And yes?

KOFI ANNAN: And of course a discussion of good behavior or bad behavior and rewarding good behavior also irritates the Iranians. They are a proud ancient nation and society. So those kinds of or that kind of discussion or talks, they find absolutely offensive. But the - it's going, you know -- this is something that they would use, the Indian agreement.

CHARLIE ROSE: They will use that in their conversations.

KOFI ANNAN: Oh, yeah, right.

CHARLIE ROSE: What do you say to the - what do you as the secretary-general say -- and I know you're on the record on this -- when the Iranian president says Israel should be wiped off the face of the earth?

KOFI ANNAN: It is unacceptable. Totally unacceptable, and I think I wasn't the only one; we were all shocked that he said that. And interestingly enough, President Khatami, whom we both know ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Yeah, exactly.

KOFI ANNAN: ... only last week said Holocaust is a fact and it should not be denied. You know, and so ...

CHARLIE ROSE: But he's no longer the president.

KOFI ANNAN: He's no longer the president, but it's good to have voices like that in Iran as well.

CHARLIE ROSE: Do you think there are voices like that and - and that those voices have an opportunity, you know, to participate in the debate and change the regime since you and I visited there in 1999?

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah. I think there're -- I'm sure there exist -- there are voices, different voices in Iran. They're probably not as vocal as others. But I'm sure they are there and they will find their own way of making their voices heard.

CHARLIE ROSE: Some say that what the America policy -- we had today, the vice president saying to an organization in Washington, we cannot allow and will not allow Iran to have nuclear weapons.

KOFI ANNAN: I hadn't heard that.

CHARLIE ROSE: That's what Vice President Cheney said today. Mr. Bolton said it would have severe consequences.

KOFI ANNAN: Consequences, yes, yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: And that pretty much says to them this is not going to happen on our watch.

KOFI ANNAN: I - I -- I would suggest that as intense efforts are going on to try and bring everyone back to the table and to see what can be done to reach an agreement and get the Iranians to contain their ambitions, we should all try and lower the rhetoric ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Yeah.

KOFI ANNAN: ... and - and allow room for calm, serious discussion on this issue. But the Iranians will also have to understand what the world expects of them. Because, in fact, if they maintain the ambition is not a nuclear weapon, in fact, I - I recall their foreign minister telling me this, then they have to find a way of convincing the world that they are not going to go the nuclear route. I think this is what divides them and the others in the Atomic Agency discussions.

CHARLIE ROSE: They have so far not only failed to do that...

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... you know, people in the international community say ...

KOFI ANNAN: That's true.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... you've hidden things. You haven't been forthcoming.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: And that causes us to be more skeptical of what you say.

KOFI ANNAN: This is it. So transparency and building trust and - and establishing confidence with the community will help immensely if the intention is only peaceful use of nuclear power.

CHARLIE ROSE: In an interesting way, I mean, this is a real test for the idea of countries formally hostile, like the United States and Russia and China, to work together-- and Europe ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... to work together on one of the most important and pressing issues ...

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: ... of our time. Nuclear proliferation. Do you think they will pass that test?

KOFI ANNAN: I hope so. But it is - it is -- I hope so. In my discussions with them, they all seem to share their - their objective of nuclear non-proliferation. And that in itself should propel them to work together to ensure that we don't have the kind of proliferation that we are all worried about. So far they have managed to work together. Whether they will be able to maintain that unity through the discussions in the agency and through the Council is difficult to say.

CHARLIE ROSE: And even if everybody votes to veto, no one knows what the wisest policy is.

KOFI ANNAN: It's - it's a difficult - it's a difficult situation, you know. We have Iran that is -- has substantial influence in the Middle East, in a region that is very volatile with lots of tensions, and we would want to work with the Iranians to resolve this issue without heightening further tensions in the region. And I think it is something that quite a lot of leaders are conscious of in the region and around - around the world. And I think the Iranians are conscious of that too.

CHARLIE ROSE: Syria. We've had an inquiry.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah.

CHARLIE ROSE: We've changed investigators.

KOFI ANNAN: That's correct.

CHARLIE ROSE: Where does that stand?

KOFI ANNAN: It's proceeding.

CHARLIE ROSE: My impression is that President Assad is not seeing your representatives.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes. Well, I think first of all, let me say the investigations are going on. We have a very good investigator, Brammertz.

CHARLIE ROSE: Right. Serge Brammertz.

KOFI ANNAN: Serge Brammertz, who has replaced the first one. And he is approaching his work very methodically, preparing - gathering the evidence and preparing the cases.

He has visited Damascus. He's going to take a second visit. And I expect him here in New York next week or around the middle of the month to brief the Security Council. He speaks very rarely to the press, so there's a sense that not much is going on. He -- and his style is different from his predecessor, but they were - they are both good ...

CHARLIE ROSE: His predecessor spoke to the press often.

KOFI ANNAN: Yeah, they're both good - good legal people. And even if he didn't, people around him did.

CHARLIE ROSE: Yes.

KOFI ANNAN: But Brammertz has been able to ...

CHARLIE ROSE: Yeah.

KOFI ANNAN: ... control the team.

CHARLIE ROSE: All right. But he has not yet seen Assad.

KOFI ANNAN: No, no. He's been to...

CHARLIE ROSE: President of Syria refuses...

KOFI ANNAN: ... he's been to see...

CHARLIE ROSE: ... to see the man investigating an assassination in which the links have been suggested between his government and the assassination.

KOFI ANNAN: I'm not sure if Brammertz has asked to see him. I'm not sure Brammertz has asked to see him. But Brammertz has been to Syria, seen some Syrian officials and will be interviewing some, but I'm not sure he has asked to see or interview Assad. So I cannot say that he has refused to see Brammertz.

CHARLIE ROSE: Darfur. (INAUDIBLE) at your own sense of why can't we do something? The world and the United Nations has basically said, OK, we're going to support the African Union. We're going to give them -- it's their backyard. Now the world seems to be and the United Nations seems to be saying, that's not enough. We need to...

KOFI ANNAN: You know, it's correct. I think the African Union did a great job. They were noble to take on this challenge when nobody else was available. And they have made a difference. In areas where they have been deployed, the situation has been relatively safe.

But they don't have enough men. They don't have enough logistics. And they have to rely on external sources both for financial support to sustain the troops, and for logistics. They themselves took a decision in principle to expand and transition to the U.N. So the U.N. will take over.

If this were to happen, we will maintain some of the African forces, re-hat them, turn them into blue helmets.

CHARLIE ROSE: Re-hat is a U.N. expression.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes, yes, exactly. And bring in additional forces from outside. I would also want to see a different concept of operation. It's a huge territory. You cannot flood it with troops.

CHARLIE ROSE: The size of France.

KOFI ANNAN: France, exactly. So you have to make up for that through mobility in the air and on the ground, which will require quite a lot of assets and effective logistics and force multipliers.

And so the idea would be if the Council -- if the African Union were to take this decision and the Council were to ask us to go in, we would operate with that mobile concept of operation.

CHARLIE ROSE: What's the brief against the Sudanese government? I mean, they didn't want the African Union in there either.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes...

(CROSSTALK)

KOFI ANNAN: That's correct. They felt they were -- they are an independent country, a sovereign state, and they can handle their own affairs. And in a way, if they had been able to calm the situation and protect their people, there would be no need for a force to go in. But that did not happen, and thus the African forces had to go in.

Today, we have reached a point where everyone agrees more is needed, but, of course, the Sudanese government is resisting this. They feel that the African Union can do the job, and with support they should be able to do it, and they do not want outside -- forces from outside of Africa coming in, even though we have a U.N. force in the south of Sudan working with them on the implementation of the north-south agreement. And we have forces from outside Africa operating in that territory.

CHARLIE ROSE: Have you asked the big powers to come in and help with some lifts and things like that that might -- the logistics of it?

KOFI ANNAN: I think given the importance and the urgency of the situation, all hands have to be on deck, and they have to be part of this and give us the support. If the U.N. decides to put in blue helmets, they have to give us all the support we need, because we can be as effective and as strong as they want us to be. Without the support, without the resources, a force in Darfur may not turn out to be more effective than we are -- than the African force, which has limited capabilities.

CHARLIE ROSE: Iraq. You were elected in 1996, a five-year term. 2001 -- help me if I remember this -- you won the Nobel Prize in 2001.

KOFI ANNAN: That's correct.

CHARLIE ROSE: In recognition, it was for you and the United Nations.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes, that's correct.

CHARLIE ROSE: There had been these kinds of great successes. East Timor has to be considered a great success.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: I mentioned the tsunami relief, I mentioned a whole range of other things. I've mentioned the millennium project and your commitment to that.

But there is Iraq. And there is oil-for-food. Tell me, I mean, 2004 was a nightmare year for you.

KOFI ANNAN: It was.

CHARLIE ROSE: Reflect on that.

KOFI ANNAN: It was -- Iraq has been an extremely difficult issue for all of us. And as I said, no one who has been involved with the Iraq problem has come out covered entirely in glory. The debate and the divisions leading to the war was very damaging for the organization and for me personally, because I really worked very hard, tried to work with the leaders both here in New York, on the phone, all the time, trying to do whatever I can or whatever we could to avert a war.

We failed. The divisions are still there. They haven't healed. They are healing, but it's going to take a bit more time. And it's been also very painful to watch the politicized campaign against the U.N. because of misconduct or maladministration by certain staff members. But in fact, when you look at the record and review the report of Voelcker, they were problems and maybe I regret that -- hadn't paid -- I wish I had paid attention to the problems earlier.

But when you look at the report, there was problems. There was some -- there was misadministration, but when it comes to corruption and fraud, I dare say the problem was with the capitals and the companies, because after that extensive and exhaustive report, only one staff member is presumed to have (INAUDIBLE) taken \$150,000. All the others were the companies sitting in their capitals making deals with Saddam. And in fact, in all this discussion, you don't even hear the name of Saddam Hussein, who was the one really making the deals with these companies. And sometimes when I look back, I am amazed that we are surprised that Saddam could cheat and try to manipulate the system.

It's done the U.N. enormous damage. And this is something that I regret.

So when you put the whole Iraqi dossier together, it's been a heavy mill around the neck, of our necks, of the United Nations.

CHARLIE ROSE: In addition to these two very personal things, one is you lost a great friend.

KOFI ANNAN: This was extremely difficult for me. Not only a great friend, many friends. I mean, I spoke to Sergio de Mello....

CHARLIE ROSE: And you sent him there, asked him to take the lead, to go there because you wanted the U.N., your best man there.

KOFI ANNAN: In fact, after the war, I had no doubt that we needed to help stabilize Iraq. I was concerned that if Iraq was not stabilized and we had a chaotic and disintegrating Iraq in the middle of the Middle East, everyone was going to pay, the region and the world. And that the international community had to do everything it can to help bring peace and stability to Iraq.

And the Security Council gave us a mandate. They were very keen for the U.N. to play a role, and honestly speaking, initially, I did not want Sergio to go. In fact, I recall in my discussions with Secretary of State Colin Powell when his name came up, I said Sergio has a job and an important one at that. He was the high commissioner for human rights.

In the end, we agreed that he would go for four months. And he went with a great team of people, including Nadia Younis (ph), who was also another dear friend, Sergio and mine chief of staff, and a whole group of brilliant set of people who have worked together, who liked to work together and liked Sergio. So they went.

And you can imagine, you know, having felt the way I did about the war and not having supported the war, to send in some of my best friends and my best people to help clean up the aftermath of the war, and then they get blown away. You can imagine the questions, the doubts, my own discouragement, sort of. What happened? How could this happen?

And I spoke to Sergio the day before he was killed. I was in Europe with Nan, and I said -- my wife, Nan. And I said, Sergio, I'm here in Europe. I would want you to fly over and see me before I return to the United States. I'll call you tomorrow to tell you where and when in Europe we should meet.

The next day he was gone. And this is somebody who was like a brother. We worked over 25 years. And he was extraordinary.

So when I went to Brazil, when the body was taken there, to see the mother, to see (INAUDIBLE), the whole nation mourning for him, what do you say?

CHARLIE ROSE: The other personal aspect of this is your son was involved and connected to the oil-for-food.

KOFI ANNAN: Which was also very difficult. I mean, there were lots of leaks and he was dragged through the press, of course with me along with it. And yet at the end of the investigation, they did not find -- he did work for a company that got a contract, but they did not conclude or find that he had anything to do with the contract.

And he took "The Sunday Times of London" to court and he won his case, and they settled out of court, because they had published an article that he had been involved in the Iraq oil deals. But of course that, you don't hear about very much.

It was a painful period for me as secretary-general and as a father, you know. An organization I believed in, an organization that is served by dedicated, wonderful people, who serve all over the world, who go to places where soldiers are not allowed to go by their governments and to be -- for all of them to be tied with a politicized campaign of corrupt individuals, corrupt organizations was not at all fair. But...

CHARLIE ROSE: They suggested you should have known about your son.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes. I wish -- I hope those who are saying that, they all have sons and children, that they know everything their sons do when you are living thousands of miles apart.

And as I said, I was the one who set up the Voelcker investigation. We wanted to get to the bottom of the story. And of course, we accepted the conclusions and the problems that came up. And we've been acting very -- we are doing -- we are moving actively to deal with it.

But as just son -- father and son, and the father knowing everything the son does, I'm not so sure that is how it happens in the real world.

CHARLIE ROSE: Legacy. I don't know whether you think about it yet or not. You've had two terms here. They're going to select another secretary-general at some point at the end of this year. You and I don't know who it will be.

KOFI ANNAN: No. We don't. And I'm staying above it. I have no dog in the race. I have no dog in this race.

CHARLIE ROSE: And somebody says that whoever you think it will be a surprise.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes.

CHARLIE ROSE: There is this, though. When you look at the United Nations today, it has gone through a difficult time since the Iraq war began. There are calls for reform. Today is the note of reform. Are you -- what do you think? Do you hope people will see your contribution in 10 years as secretary-general? What do you hope they will see?

KOFI ANNAN: I think they will say that we've done a lot in the past 10 years. I'm not even going to talk about my period as head of peacekeeping operations.

I think in the past 10 years, I have tried to work with the member states to open up the U.N. We've brought in the constituency of the U.N. beyond governments, in working with we the people, as I call them -- civil society, foundations, the private sector -- working in partnership to tackle the issues and the problems that we have to deal with. I think we've put economic issues and the fight against poverty

firmly at the center of the international agenda through the millennium declaration and the millennium development goals.

CHARLIE ROSE: Poverty and global health.

KOFI ANNAN: Yes, and we have really provided a common framework for economic development, where we have to have fight poverty, we have to fight diseases like HIV/AIDS and try and reverse it, we have to insure universal education of boys and girls, we have to fight environmental degradation and so forth.

And we have also been able to force the international community to look at the this incredible epidemic of HIV/AIDS that is killing millions, particularly in Africa and is growing in Eastern Europe and in Asia, and we were able to help set up the global fund which has -- which is now being used to help those who are living with HIV/AIDS, and to work on prevention, and working with companies on vaccine and lower -- and seeking to lower prices of medication for these people.

I hope they would also understand that in the area of development, we've tried to forge a partnership between the north and the south fully in the Monterey conference, getting the south to agree that it would improve their governance, and in exchange the north would invest more in development and encourage also direct private investment, and that partnership is also moving ahead.

So I hope it will be said when they look at the record that not only did I try to, in my own reform efforts, make the U.N. an effective instrument, but I have put the United -- I have put the individual at the center of everything the U.N. is about. When you look at our program, it is about the individual, his dignity, his health, education of a child. How to protect them from infectious diseases, how do we assure our collective security? And so I hope -- and I hope it would also be said that the U.N. is functioning better than it did 10 years ago.

CHARLIE ROSE: Thank you for coming.

The United Nations and all of us as people on this planet face a range of issues now that were not even on the horizon 10 years ago. We look at a pandemic today that threatens all of us. We look at certain kinds of conflicts that seem to multiply. And the United Nations, I think even its worst critic would recognize that it has a powerful role to play, and they hope that the forces will come together to give it resources and the opportunity to do that.

Thank you for coming. It's a pleasure to have you here.

KOFI ANNAN: Thank you. It's good to be here. The U.N. has gone through a difficult patch, but it will survive and thrive.

CHARLIE ROSE: Kofi Annan, the seventh secretary-general of the United Nations. He leaves his term at the end of this year.

Thank you for joining us. See you next time.

END

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