

**Tribute to Kofi Annan
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**By
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Kofi Annan was an illustrious son of Ghana and Africa, but also an indefatigable citizen of the world. His roots have always remained, and will always remain proudly in Ghana. But the positive essence he had become, and the love that inspired it, covered the entire world. The outpouring of tributes from around the globe goes to testify the wide reach of Kofi Annan's impact. For those of us who had the privilege to know and work with him, being in his company was always a lesson in humility, creating harmony, treating everyone with respect and dignity, and taking a stand against injustice. As a person, he was a model of the very best in humanity, and this manifested in his sense of dedication, service and an unshakable hope in the human race.

It was indeed Kofi the man, that shaped Kofi, the Secretary-General. Kofi Annan was admittedly the architect of several global transformations. But above all else, he was the epitome of decency, genuinely empathetic, with effortless brilliance and a clear vision for the organization he led, a vision that was organically shared by and with his staff.

Kofi Annan rose through the ranks to lead the United Nations into the 21st century with unparalleled dignity and determination. As Secretary-General, he transformed and strengthened the organization in finding solutions to some of the most acute global problems. He was a 'changemaker', while at the same time returning to the core values of the UN Charter: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war.

Under his leadership, the global community, for the first time, made a collective priority commitment to addressing the challenges facing humanity through the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals, putting people first, and holding leaders accountable. Kofi Annan redirected the focus of the UN to the core values of the Charter, insisting that the organization should be assessed by the difference it made to peoples' lives. It was his words and his actions that triggered the global response to the epidemic of HIV/AIDs, Tuberculosis and Malaria. It was through his guidance that peace security and development were linked, forcing a new perspective to address the root causes of conflict.

The very creation of the United Nations Office for West Africa, which I'm proud to lead, was a product of his vision of creating regional responses to peace and security. Kofi Annan worked hard and successfully to find a permanent solution to the boundary disputes between Cameroon and Nigeria, the legacy of which is the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission.

After his tenure at the United Nations, he continued pushing for through his numerous engagements as the "world's mediator" in the crisis in Kenya, the conflict in Syria and defusing tensions and providing advice on situations throughout the globe. The search for peace in a cause to which he was dedicated till his very last days.

He was relentless in his search for peace and a defender of humanist values. Truly empathetic, visionary and as stated by the current U.N. Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, "a guiding force for good".

Kofi Annan is the model of what it means to dedicate your life to the service of humanity, and the very best of humanity. His was a life well lived, mostly for the benefit of others. We pray for his peaceful eternal rest, and for his family, and indeed all of us, to have the fortitude to bear this immeasurable loss. Though we mourn, we also celebrate the life of a great man. Though we are weakened by our sorrows, we are also strengthened by our determination to continue his work: the search for peace and to make the world a better place for all.