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**Statements by H.E. Peter Thomson,
Tribute to Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations**

Secretary-General,
Secretary-General-designate,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The General Assembly's adoption of today's resolution by acclamation is indeed fitting tribute to the outstanding tenure of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

Over the last ten years, Secretary-General Ban has led the United Nations with unwavering principles for the good, with dedicated professionalism, and with never-tiring service to humanity.

Beginning his term with a world on the brink of a financial crisis, he guided the United Nations through a period of extraordinary global change. Whether it was shifting international dynamics, a rebalancing of economic influence, rapid technological advances, or the rising interconnectivity and mobility of people, Secretary-General Ban was always in the vanguard.

Throughout the widening inequality within and between nations, the spread of violent extremism and terrorism, the emergence of new global health threats, and the growing frequency and severity of natural disasters due to Climate Change, his leadership stood firm.

As these epochal changes unfolded and major new challenges emerged, our Secretary-General never swayed from his determination to ensure the United Nations was always a resolute force for global good.

He advanced the values of the United Nations across the world, at the front-line of trouble-spots and at international summits alike. And through it all, he pursued measures to make the organization more transparent, to make it more effective and, yes, 'fit-for-purpose'.

Secretary-General Ban oversaw innumerable accomplishments during his time in office, covering all three pillars of the United Nations: from advancing preventative diplomacy, to promoting inclusivity and strengthening the UN's partnerships with regional organizations.

From appointing the first Youth Envoy and deepening the UN's focus on young people, to pursuing disarmament and overseeing the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty.

From serving as a committed advocate for the interests of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, to overseeing delivery of critical humanitarian assistance and development programmes across the world.

The list of accomplishments goes on and on. But today we can reflect in particular on three of the Secretary-General's achievements. Firstly, there is his unswerving leadership in advancing global action on Climate Change.

For ten years, Secretary-General Ban was an unrelenting force in raising global awareness of the catastrophic consequences of our planet's warming, and in galvanizing world leaders to act. His unceasing efforts ultimately led to the adoption of the Paris Agreement, which fittingly entered into force during his tenure. During the course of that mammoth process, he successfully mobilized business, cities, civil society and other partners for progress, to act collectively to address the great challenges of Climate Change.

The second great accomplishment on which to reflect today, is Secretary-General Ban's vision and determination to realize a more just, prosperous, and secure world through the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Together with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Action, and other multilateral agreements adopted by Member States over the last 15 months, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides humanity with a universal masterplan to end extreme poverty, increase prosperity, empower women and girls, and build peaceful and inclusive societies. Combined with the Paris Climate Change Agreement, if universally implemented, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda gives us all a secure path away from the unsustainable future looming ahead.

And thirdly, it must be said that Secretary-General Ban's support for gender equality was a cornerstone of his tenure. He oversaw the establishment of UN Women, and pushed for a stronger role for women at the United Nations. He championed numerous campaigns relating to women's rights and was the first Secretary-General in history to identify as a feminist.

As a tireless advocate for good, Secretary-General Ban leaves an enduring legacy rooted in commitment to peace, human rights, justice, and equality.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I offer profound thanks to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his service to the United Nations. In times of quiet reflection ahead, may he take great and richly deserved pride in all he achieved as Secretary-General of the United Nations.

I wish also to thank Mrs. Ban Soon-taek on behalf of you all, for the steadfast support she gave throughout the decade of her husband's work and for her own dedication to the good works of the United Nations.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I also seize this opportunity to pay tribute to the Deputy-Secretary-General Jan Eliasson for his long service to the United Nations. He will ever serve as an exemplar for

young diplomats, and all those who amidst the tortuous struggles, conflicts and strife of difficult days, hold fast to belief in the universal rights, infinite potential and the beauty of humanity. On behalf of you all, I wish the Deputy Secretary-General and Mrs. Kerstin Eliasson many years of happiness upon their return to Sweden.

I thank all of you very much.