



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE TO EXHIBITION ON THE SCULPTURE *NON-VIOLENCE*

New York, 1 September 2001

Non-Violence -- or "the knotted gun" as it is known to many in this house -- is familiar to literally millions of people. For those who come to visit United Nations headquarters in New York, it is usually the first thing they see. After they leave, it is often the thing they remember best. Through postcards and snapshots, it has become well-known even to many who have never set foot in New York. That is not only because of the striking image of the work of art itself. It is also because the sculpture expresses, perhaps more clearly than any other single item, what the United Nations stands for: our common mission to defeat the forces of violence and hatred which exist in our world; our perpetual struggle to confront the worst in man with the best in man.

With *Non-Violence*, Carl Fredrik Reuterswärd has not only endowed the United Nations with a cherished work of art; he has enriched the consciousness of humanity with a powerful symbol. It is a symbol that encapsulates, in a few simple curves, the greatest prayer of man: that which asks not for victory, but for peace.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Annan'.

Kofi A. Annan