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THREATS AND RESPONSES; A Letter From Iraq To the Chief Of the U.N.

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Following is the text of a letter that was sent yesterday by Naji Sabri, Iraq's minister of foreign affairs, to Secretary General Kofi Annan, allowing the return of United Nations weapons inspectors without conditions:

I have the honor to refer to the series of discussions held between Your Excellency and the Government of the Republic of Iraq on the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions on the question of Iraq, which took place in New York on 7 March and 2 May and in Vienna on 4 July 2002, as well as the talks which were held in your office in New York on 14 and 15 September 2002, with the participation of the secretary general of the League of Arab States.

I am pleased to inform you of the decision of the Government of the Republic of Iraq to allow the return of United Nations weapons inspectors to Iraq without conditions.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq has responded, by this decision, to your appeal, to the appeal of the Secretary General of the League of Arab States, as well as those of Arab, Islamic and other friendly countries.

The Government of the Republic of Iraq has based its decision concerning the return of inspectors on its desire to complete the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions and to remove any doubts that Iraq still possesses weapons of mass destruction.

This decision is also based on your statement to the General Assembly on 12 September 2002 that the decision by the Government of the Republic of Iraq is the indispensable first step towards an assurance that Iraq no longer possesses weapons of mass destruction and, equally importantly, towards a comprehensive solution that includes the lifting of the sanctions imposed on Iraq and the timely implementation of the other provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 687 (1991).

To this end, the Government of the Republic of Iraq is ready to discuss the practical arrangements necessary for the immediate resumption of inspections.

In this context, the Government of the Republic of Iraq reiterates the importance of the commitment of all member states of the Security Council and the United Nations to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of Iraq, as stipulated in the relevant Security Council resolutions and Article II of the Charter of the United Nations.

I would be grateful if you bring this letter to the attention of the Security Council members.

Please accept, Mr. Secretary General, the assurances of my highest consideration.

DR. NAJI SABRI

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Iraq