



extended interviews



ANNAN: No, they are not behind us. One can come to the UN, but we will have to make the judgement whether it is a kind of operation and the kind of environment that one would want to introduce UN 'blue helmets' [into], sometimes lightly armed. Or it is a kind of environment where you need a robust army with a capacity and logistical assets to carry on the operation. In this case we decided that it would have to be a multinational force. But the Council endorsed that. So the Council can determine that a force should go in, and make a judgement whether they should be 'blue helmets', or authorise other countries to do it under a UN flag.

Q: Towards, I think the end of September and in October, the United States started paying some of the money it owes you, and also stumping up some money for peacekeeping troops, or for past peacekeeping operations. Did that take you by surprise?

ANNAN: No, it didn't because we had been working on it for sometime and working

going on and the population - which were often in the urban centres - had dispersed and gone into rural areas, we couldn't reach them as readily as we would have liked to. So we were worried, that's correct.

Q: And are you concerned that the UN might become a target in some cases? There were attacks in Pakistan I think on UN staff and ..

ANNAN: .. the refugee camps, yes, yes.

Q: Bin Laden himself associated the United Nations in one of his videos with the war on Muslims. Did that worry you?

ANNAN: It was a bit worrying. I worried for my staff and the operations. Of course I was cited personally, but it didn't scare me as I had work to do. So I went ahead with my work. But I was worried for our staff who are spread all over the world, in very dangerous situations, giving assistance to people in need, and they were terribly exposed. But luckily that did not happen. But we were worried and we strengthened our security, which is not a big operation, but we needed to get in a bit more people and to get staff to be more cautious.

Q: Can you describe the way the effort to put together. An interim regime after the fall of Kabul was co-ordinated between your special envoy and the Americans. Did you work closely together on that?

ANNAN: I think that quite a lot of the credit should go to Lakhdar Brahimi who really was very steady. And, of course, the US and quite a lot of the countries in the Six-plus-Two group: the US, Russia, [the] Iranians. All of them worked very closely, and in Bonn the US delegate was very helpful, and so were the Iranians. But Lakhdar, who had been handling the Afghan problem for quite some time, he had been there and left. Then I convinced him to come back. [He] knew the culture, knew the people, knew the leaders, and that knowledge was of immeasurable value as we went ahead and pressed ahead in Kabul. But I think you are right. If the

they are going to see light at the end of the day, as they put it, and end the suffering of their people, is by complying with the Security Council resolutions.

Q: But to be absolutely clear on your position, you don't believe that action against Iraq would be covered by self-defence in the way that action