

2001 Nobel Peace Prize Co-recipient. 1938 - 2018

KOFI ANNAN

7th UN Secretary General

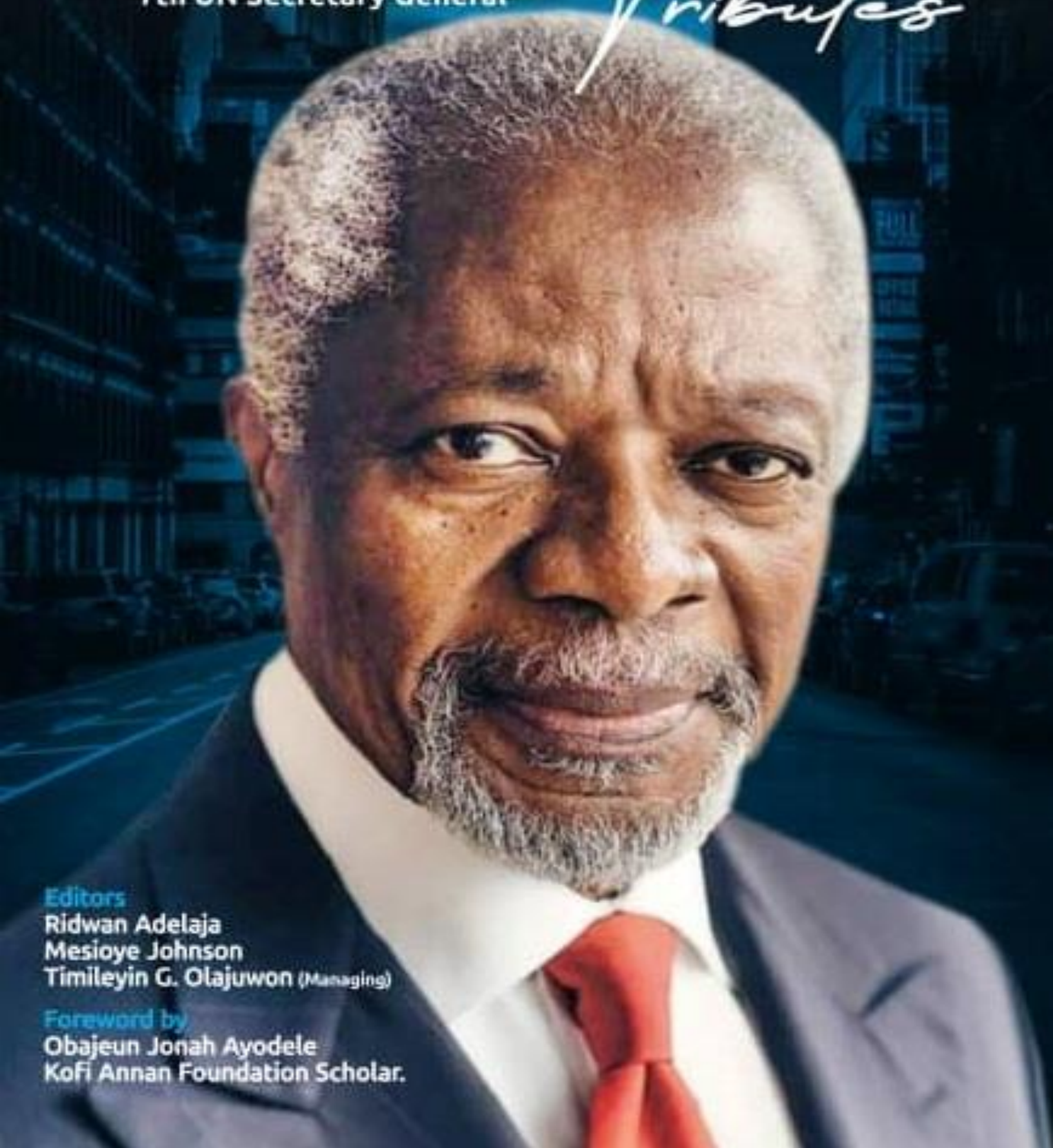
Tributes

Editors

Ridwan Adelaja
Mesioye Johnson
Timileyin G. Olajuwon (Managing)

Foreword by

Obajeun Jonah Ayodele
Kofi Annan Foundation Scholar.



KOFI ANNAN TRIBUTE

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DEDICATION

KOFI ATTA ANNAN

7th UN Secretary General

2001 Nobel Peace Prize Co-recipient

Founder: Kofi Annan Foundation

(8th April, 1938 – 18th August , 2018)

INTRODUCTION

“You will be remembered for everything you do - whether be it good or bad”. Based on the foregoing, the late Kofi Annan indubitably won hearts of millions of people in the world through his good deeds and peaceful missions. He was a selfless leader and mentor to many young minds and a father to tons of children. He was one of the most notable peace fighters who fought till his last breathe despite all odds and challenges. Kofi Annan relentlessly served humanity in each capacity and position he finds himself, with one sole aim/objective “PEACE”. It is against the backdrop of these notable attributes, achievements and accolades that this book was born.

As the title implies, Kofi Annan Tribute is a collection of poems and essays for the late Ghanaian Diplomat, peace advocate and exemplary leader - Kofi Annan. The book has over 50 contributors; with practically one contributor from each continent of the world including Africa, Asia, North America etcetera. This book speaks about the vast contributions of Kofi Annan to world progress, social cohesion, equality, justice, peace development and conflict resolution. Furthermore, the contributors observed their respect to the great icon with their powerful thoughts in the artistry form of beautifully written poems and essays- that capture his childhood to the very last minute he dined with his elders.

The rationale behind this collection however is to: immortalize his name on pages and preserve his thoughts, achievements etcetera in the history of the world, serve as an honour and respect to him for a well and worthwhile life lived, promote peaceful coexistence, discourage racism and propagate ethnical collectiveness which practically was achieved with the bringing together of writers across the globe as a sign of unity.

It is on this note that I therefore on behalf of Muse for Peace Foundation appreciate the contributors in this book for their time and patience. We also want to tender our unreserved gratitude to Mr. Ridwan Adelaja and Mr. Mesioye Johnson; both honored us with their time in editing and proofreading this work respectively. More so, our deepest appreciation goes to Mr Jonah Obajeun (*Kofi Annan Foundation Scholar*) for his warmth support towards the realization of this project.

Conclusively, as rightly put “Goodbye is the hardest thing to say to someone who means

the world to you, especially when goodbye isn't what you want". This is particular to Kofi Atta Annan, we have never wished a goodbye and that is why we will keep you forever in our hearts. LIVE ON KOFI ANNAN!

Timileyin Gabriel Olajuwon

Muse for Peace Foundation

Executive Director

FOREWORD

In a breath, everything around Kofi became silent. Silence reached out of his head and enfolded him in its martyred arms. It swayed the world to the rhythm of an ancient, foetal heartbeat. Silence sent its stealthy, suckered tentacles inching along the layers of his skull, hovering the knolls and dells of his memory, dislodging painful sentences, whisking them off the tip of his tongue. Silence stripped Kofi's thoughts of the words that described them and left them pared and naked. Unspeakable. Slowly, Kofi withdrew from the world. He grew accustomed to the uneasy octopus that lived inside him and squirted its inky sedative on his past – the wars he tried to stop, the families he re-united, the relationships he rebuilt. Gradually the reason for his silence was unblanketed – Kofi won by dying!

A refreshingly bookish meal of tribute, this compilation offers poignant details of a man whose life revolved around an ailing world in need of therapy. It is a reflection of the very day the atmosphere became darkened as Kofi's whistles tapered to a halt and the sky began to clap and grumble. Then raindrop began to hit the roof, lizard scampered for cover, Kofi was gone and the gods laughed at grief.

Here is a collection of voices of coloured caps, voices from the labyrinth of cracks, hopes, dreams, breaks. These voices know no parenthesis of sadness but of ecstasy springing from the abyss of pulsating hearts with words – their windows, their ways of seeing, breathing, hearing. Here are words, revealing the nuggets of happiness that sorrow harbours.

In the words of Kofi, if one is going to err, one should err on the side of liberty and freedom. To err on the side of freedom is to walk away from pleasurable infamy. To err on the side of liberty is to swim naked in the sea of un-caged souls. To be cleansed with whoosh – the wind that blows hitches to soothing relief. To err on the side of liberty and freedom is to wait for salty air, for hearts to open to taste as rain rises golden flakes.

This compilation in your hand – a mashed poetry and short essays about Kofi Annan, x-rays the very essence of living, the process of dying and the after-world of life. This collection errs on the side of liberty and freedom – to live, to die and to mystically live again. In Adesina Ajala's poem of everything, Kofi's liberty is implied:

Ordinary. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels..."

You were how a petal sprouted, spread & touched nations carrying unity in its fragrance.

In conferring Doctoral title on Kofi, Adesina Ajala goes further:

*Tranquilizing, a potent anaesthesia to our paining world,
The lingering of your effects on the skins of humanity mumbled on our lips like prayers
tearing down our hearts –gathering in temples of bodies, blest incense*

Like a diaphanous thread, embossed with dainty dewdrops. Like a spider's web, frailty sagging between branches, the relationship between war and Kofi became a fast-fading mist – a vanishing world of colours, a severing connection, a deafening silence, an awkward atmosphere of reluctance. All Kofi did was to keep walking in and out of fire in search of truce, out of strife, through the pain of life. Mohammed Shamsudeen's *Going Gray* put it in context:

*Defying racial mentally
And sewing torn countries
With needles of peace*

On the other hand, this compilation expresses how Kofi walked this earth with the aura of a free born. Free mind, free like prism of energy invisible to the naked eye. The consciousness of his humanity was a physical reality of his mind even within the hollows of blackness of unborn choices – a black abyss and vacuum where time would extract life. With the united mystery of the world, Kofi's demise became a myth, a vision in the woods. But Godwin Nket-Awaji Alpheaus's *Weeping and Consoling* in this collection throws a poser:

*But an arcane voice reiterates:
"How men die is a discrete sylvan life;
Study the trees three hundred years or more,
Look at newly-grafted trees in Africa and alien land,
Listen intently to coos, chirps and hoots of birds;
Look at the moon and stars in the night sky;
Look at the epigraph on world's placard;
Look into humanity's vein... you'll find
Kofi Annan flowing as its corpuscle;
Then you'll weep not, but console one another!"*

Here is Ololade Akinlabilge's *For the Missing Man* lending credence to Alpheaus's portrayal of mortality of life:

*Yesterday we danced around the bridges of time;
These dances are of nitty-gritty,
We were elated for we thought in seven moons to come*

The Boy, the Akan Boy by Aremu Adams Adebisi is a rendition of a journeying soul, trudging to the weakening effect of yesterday and dancing to strange songs of the wind:

*You dance to the songs of Gum-jigi.
The boy uncorks the wind from a bottle,
it runs down your throats in freedom;
your lung stalks speed, it burns black,
sets a sail into the boy's goldfield.*

In all, we discover poets and essayists clearly in love with the soothing relief of language. Unafraid to make words scream for attention. These voices give life to words, to make them flip, to make them make music, to make them sing, to make Kofi live again!

Obajeun Jonah Ayodele
Kofi Annan Foundation Scholar



*“To live is to choose. But to choose well,
you must know who you are and what
you stand for, where you want to go and
why you want to get there...”*

*If one is going to err, one should err on
the side of liberty and freedom!!!”*

- Kofi Annan.

~ Poems ~

K.O.F.I A.T.T.A A.N.N.A.N

Knight –a gladiator that wielded bravery in this bloody theatre of hate,
& held peace to the tip of his spear & the edge of his sword.

Ordinary."But we have this treasure in earthen vessels... "
You were how a petal sprouted, spread & touched nations carrying unity in its
fragrance.

Faithful to the clogged course of peace,
Adherently, you strewed your heart in untainted allegiance to deepening humanity.

Inspirational –the way you wore a pendant of perfume about your persona,
& swept continents in your gracefulness.

Assisting like a full blown tree –you held your branches out & helped nest a hurting
humanity,
Many have curled round your stem to catch a gleam of the sun.

Tranquilizing, a potent anesthesia to our paining world,
The lingering of your effects on the skins of humanity mumbled on our lips like
prayers tearing down our hearts –gathering in temples of bodies, blest incense.

Tactical like a war man with a clutched weapon,
You fired through the world gifting us the spoils of your passion & vision.

Ambassadorial: a scion of Africa.
One good thing from this Nazareth –where black is synonym for anything stark, back
& dark.

Altruist! You stood almost stoic;
Guided this traffic of hope a bit out of the jam of darkness.

Novel in the births of the Peace-building Commission & the Human Rights
Council,
Peculiar in efforts and effrontery, sterling in mission & action.

Notable like a beaming graffiti;
A star drawn with the finesse of Michel Angelo twinkling cities into lights.

Amiable & amicable is the way aura broke from your soul,
You held the world to your charm & magic, grace & grit.

Nobility is the colour your epitaph wore today, written in the verses of this poem.
A boy born on a Friday froze the world to a solemn & cold valediction, raised
Ebenezer.

ADESINA AJALA
Nigeria.

AT METRO STATION

Kofi, horse neighs in Switzer-ranch
Shadow fades within the falling night
Breeze mourns your lonesome ghost,
Day rose in Ghana falls in Switzerland.

Could ghost's soles print on scary plain
Kofi, pour me a coffee at your balcony.
Could your shroud be sew to night gown,
May the foggy day repay mourning clover.

Kofi, Eve sun lures kids to the river side...
Kofi, if son pours grease on river's sight...
Kofi, can cough of elders bring kids home,
Can mama survive the poisonous streams?
Where kept the key to the world peace?

Await us at border lesser in trauma
Where freedom isn't for rulers a melon.
Kofi Annan, the African train at metro station
Do rest to reset the journey in this wreckage,
Rest in peace Kofi, painful missing your train.

POET LOADED AKINWEMIMO IDRIS
Nigeria.

THE WORLD'S PEACE MAKER FROM AFRICA

An entire continent bleeds
Plunged in rivers of tears
Hearts torn with grief
Bones shrieking with pain
Grinding teeth like metal kissing
The rough tar,
Another star has fallen from the heavens
To spark no more.

Blessed be the earth upon which you tread.
The lives inspired, forever will remain grateful.
And to generations shall it be recounted,
That once, a great man made of it a better place,
this continent for which we all are proud.
For peace you fought and in peace you shall rest.
Your sun on earth is set,
But the rays of your light will remain eternal.

OBEN K DJEUDO
Cameroon.

KOFI

When elements go haywire
Shadows get ravenous
Life revolves in eccentric
orbits, turning topsy-turvy

People come, adorn universe
They are not bound in the fetters
of caste, creed, religion, ethnicity
Their religion is just humanity

Annan born in Ghana, spread
Peace as the silent air in chilly skies
They go on living in hearts
Defying time and mortality

KINSHUK GUPTA
India.

KOFI ANNAN: god OF GREAT WINGS

We can love what we are,
without hating
what and who
we are not.

Put the individual human being
at the centre of everything
that an organization wants to do
it will not only work beautifully
but will sync and sing.

The world is not ours
to keep
we hold it in trust
for future generations
irrespective of colors
Creeds and nations.

Knowledge is the power
information liberating
education the premise of progress
in every society
and in every family

It has been said
arguing against globalization
is arguing against
laws of gravity
now it's true for every nation.

To live is to choose
but to choose well
one must know
who one is
and what one stands for,

where you want to go
and why you want to go there
evaluation and evolving is must
to find oneself out
of deep despair.

Ignorance and prejudice are
the handmaidens of propaganda
literacy is a bridge
from misery to hope
now it is an unhidden agenda.

Education is a human right
with immense power
to transform,
On its foundation
rests the cornerstones
of freedom, democracy
and diligent development.

More than ever before
in human history
we share a common destiny,
we can master it only
if we face it together
as united nations.

We need to keep
hope alive
and strive
to do better,
we have the means

and the capacity
to deal with
the ordeals,
if only
we can find
the ever necessary
political will.

ASHISH KUMAR PATHAK
India.

THE IROKO TREE THAT FELL LAST NIGHT LIVES AGAIN!

Again, we have the fall of another giant...
Chai! Death, why are you always unkind?
You've stabbed us again by snatching him.
Why would you have to come suddenly like that?
This wasn't the bargain with life!
Oh no! You've fallen another fate of my existence.
You came too quick and soon for us to notice!
Really... not now that my pen needs an ink to bleed.
You form a river on my cheeks,
making my pen feel the cold of inspiration.
You snatched him to be caged in your oven
not minding the immortality of his once-danced pen.
You hid him in red sand to tear us apart.
Now, you boast of victory while we wail in sorrow.
Guess what, while taking him away last night,
you forgot his name on paper!
You left his footprints on papers,
Hey...you totally got it all wrong!
I mean... you have failed!
You know why?
The *Iroko* tree you fell last night lives again!
He lives even longer than you had ever imagined.
He lives in faces of pages and minds of the living!
Death, where then is your victory?
Death, where then is your pride?
Your dumb skull has actually failed you!

Have you no idea of the immortality of Heroes?
Mtchew.... Kofi Annan lives!
Live long Annan...in the other room
just as you live on the pages of our history.

BUAH, DNSABE KUNI
Sir Dan.

KOFI ANNAN: A BIOGRAPHY

He was born of the ancient Gold coast - GHANA
In the year my father dare not dream of - 1938
In pair, he spiraled into the world with Efua - His twin
Born of the black continent, the future is as dark as his color
As he grew he spindled with the dark element of the world
The death of Efua and the purge of his race douse his prowess
But yet he stood tall as African of the ancient blood
Although Efua's death he cannot change but he fought the bad
Wearing names of exterminating barbarians
He stood till fate pushed him to the top of the world - UNITED NATIONS
And there he showed forth the African way of life: PEACE
He made decisions for, likewise made decision against
Yet he propagated peace to vagabonds
Until life turned him to THE ELDERS
And death joined him to the elders
O! What a man
What a vision to look up to
Little can be done to replicate you
But your tenace shall forever live in the heart of men
KOFI ANNAN.

OLABAMIJI ABAYOMI M.
Nigeria.

GOOD NIGHT KOFI

When we heard the news Kofi, we didn't believe it
We came out in our numbers
From near and far away
Just to confirm that it was true
After the TV released the news, our hearts knew no rest
Our tears, we poured on our social pages
The tip of our pens became wet with ink
We vomited words that made the gods shed tears
Now, we're here Kofi,
To pay you our last respect
Our eyes are dry. Our eyes are dried Kofi
Do you know why?
Because we know that you'll meet peace in your journey
And that you'll not be alone in that strange land where you now sojourn
Kofi, this is a letter we brought to you
Give it to your brother Mandela upon your arrival
He should know that we are not in peace
Kofi, you know better than us that nations are bleeding in fright
That war is tearing us apart,
That blood kills blood
That our leaders are indifferent to these disgraceful acts
I know, I know that you did the best you could
Trying to make us feel secure
Kofi, I may go on and on spelling out
what you have done so far
But I wouldn't want to disturb your peaceful sleep
Rest in peace Kofi!
Good night Kofi!
Farewell Kofi!
We hope to meet again.

NNANE NTUBE
Cameroon.

GARLAND

This man of dust
Splits our minds into brooked syllables
Our bodies become fragments of cracked gold
His white hair had matted our penchants
Every night we dream of going to the earth
Where African children sprout out of the memories of Annan
Where they had been hiding on the map
And gather around- beyond the continent- of Africa
To see how the sun has left the noon in a silent world.
This man of dust
Is a goaled ghost
That turned yesterday's night into fulfilled dreams
We live on the dreams
Like how ants feed on the boulevards of sugar
The pangs of the sun have risen into the land
To wash away the colour of the skins of Africa
But last time the wind blew the dust unto my face
I breathe out to see Annan memoirs
Live forever in the soil of Africa.

TAOFEEK ONAFOWOKAN
Nigeria.

THE BOY WHO STOOD FOR PEACE

There's always a spirit
yearning to come alive
inside everyman that lives.
Some men become rebellious,
others allow the spirit to lead
& speak of them to the world.
Kofi was that boy that became
a man, who allowed his spirit
to speak of him to the world.
He was that boy that stood for peace,
He was that boy that abhors segregation;
The color of his skin was not a barrier,
transcending nations, brokering peace, cementing relationships
& showing true love beyond frontiers.
Every story has a beginning & an end
The story of this boy had a wonderful beginning
& a remarkable & beautiful ending
that will keep many chanting history forever
as we lose a friend, a brother, a peace lover and a father.
Rest on Kofi Annan
your legacies will keep you alive
& you will live forever in our hearts.

OPIA-ENWEMUCHE MAXWELL ONYEMAECHI
Nigeria.

ADIEU DADDY KOFI

You showed up in a tumultuous world
silently
You showed them peace could be had
in your quiet way,
now you moved on
to your Lord's presence
Thank God the world had a life like you
Adieu, my Daddy Kofi

MOHAMMED AWAL M.
Nigeria.

GOING GRAY

The clouds gathered
And you were a rainbow;
The sinister storms surge
Then you became sunshine.

A bridge you were
From Africa to the world
Defying racial mentally
And sewing torn countries
With needles of peace.

Now time calls for your sleep:
Go grey and gay—
Kofi Annan,
Dammirifa due!

MOHAMMED SHAMSU-DEEN
Nigeria

SUN IN THE CLOUD

"If the sky will continue
To rumble in her indigo sorrows
Let her not rumble for Kofi Annan.
Let him live long like the length of a
Salty sea," we once prayed.

But the cloud has rebelled in its
Glorious black and clouded the sun.
The sky rumbled in Geneva, Hague
and the earth gaps in Accra where a tuber
of a unique species was planted.
We planted Kofi to have many suns in the sky, sun
that will tear indigo tapestry of clouds,
a sun that will cause careless lips to tear with smile in harmattan.

DAMILOLA JOSEPH
Nigeria.

PEACE FOR ALL

Undying influence, true crusader of proclaiming peace
Above all in the world of darkness; peace will withstand all,
Dedicating true passion in drafting a life philosophy
Speeches, dialogues, states to re-vamp, re-align
Millions respected his words, his calm voice, firmness in his eyes
His teachings, his lessons imprinted everlasting memories
Years merging in years, firmly guiding the spirit of oneness of life
Humanism to be upheld, a light will always burn
Instilling deep bonds of humanity be woven into strong voices
Resisting hate deeply peace, an international leader rebuilding nations
Cultures, religions, races quietly blending single life premises
Inclusiveness through tolerance, to all the deep oceans along all faraway lands
Rising sun by dint of rising moon pursuing righteous hope for peace
One spirit he was, he did live by his values
The pillars of his ethics, moderating the world to come together as a single land
Let each one of us come to seed love and compassion in human mankind
Embracing human warmth, embracing one connect
Borders that secure their soils yet breakaway the spirit of oneness
He aimed at peace for all, in real may peace be achieved for all
He worked to stop the endless grappling for power between nations
To work towards the better future of mankind, to instill faith
Time took his mortal self away, yet he lives on, the greatest peace apostle
Dearest cause of his heart left, with binding us
As citizens of the modern world to stand up together
While striving for peace only, for us should exist one world only!

ANINDITA RAY
India.

HE SENT ME PEACE

I never met him but heard
more about his stories when
he died on 18th August 2018
why, I wondered. why did I
not meet him before or could
not reach out to him
this is an era of social media,
and I failed to know a man
who spreads peace...
but of course, the world has
its own ways and I dreamt –
he came and said to me that
I shall receive as much as is
written for me, but I must not
give up
a common message we are all
tired of and I ignored,
the next day I met a beggar man
asking for alms, when I gave him
a note of twenty he said, I shall
receive as much as is written for
me, but I must not give up...
and walked away in happiness,
I stood for minutes and then saw
a man of eighty years old, leaving
behind peace for me

ANINDITA BOSE
India.

PEACE IS YOU

Peace like your joy knows no bound
When love is elevated on the pure ground,
When generosity is a favor from folks' inner navels,
When earthy hell becomes the reward of worthless rivals.

Peace like your rest will never reign for ever-long,
Until the just justice of peace right what is wrong,
Until the innocent cadavers are consoled with dirge song,
Until piles of wealth are spilled before unsuspecting throng.

Peace as your in-and-out breathing, you understand,
Is necessary for the freedom to act freely and stand,
And not to be unjustly justified in time's sand.
Peace, you fathom, is germane to values of cedi, riyal or rand.

Peace is you, you are the world's peace,
Ready to tread the world as a combatant in one piece.
Peace is you, you are the world's trace to its rightful place,
Ready to touch every hearts in your progressive pace.

ABDULHAFEEZ T. OYEWOLE
Nigeria.

THE BOY, THE AKAN BOY

The boy puts a song in your mouth,
you hug the volume of oneness.
You put your arms round the song's rhythm
with him, huddled on your feet,
lunging at the shadows back & forth.
You dance to the songs of *Gum-jigi*.
The boy uncorks the wind from a bottle,
it runs down your throats in freedom;
your lung stalks speed, it burns black,
sets a sail into the boy's goldfield.
Your ears hitch to listen to the flutes
of peace — *Asomdwoe! Asomdwoe!*
Sound of the *Wassa, Kra&Sumsum*.
Asomdwoe, Asomdwoe, sunset & ash.
The boy folds his wings into meals,
you join in the *Banku &TuoZaafi*.
The boy has friends who call him Elder,
who draw into walls a TV set with chalk,
still the memories of the world, whose hands
form a pistol grip, castles out of sand.
You hear them sing songs of kites,
later songs of glory, glory & God's eye.
Standing apart like glass, arms akimbo,
the boy nods his head at falling leaves,
his friends & rhythm dancing in the rain.

AREMU ADAMS ADEBISI
Nigeria.

WHEN WINGLESS ANGEL DIES

When wingless angels die,
the body goes but the soul stays.
Death only show faces glowing with burden
and it owns their deeply distorted expressions.
Some kind of burden that craves to be perceived and apprehended
so it can no longer reflect burden.
Imprint of the soul,
filled with silence of ever-pain and welfare,
imprint longing for the bravest achievements
nothing less than courage in the unique life's paths.
Soul arises from places unthinkable of exploring.
Soul that created the world,
world taken from the depths of reality
while at the same time alien to reality.
Soul with need
to establish some kind of peace
and order in the chaotic every-day.
Soul with tranquility of simple splendor,
unnatural for the restlessness of our time.
Soul with sight and smile as hope
for a better world fulfilled with love and peace.

LJUBOMIR MIHAJLOVSKI
Macedonia.

GOODBYE PA ANNAN

Goosebumps muted the cell
In my body when the
Midnight gong cried
Of your transition to
The great beyond.

Where is that wind of night
That whisked you away?
Why must the gods
Approve this unripe harvest?

How can I marry this shock
Since your leadership,
Charisma and Selfless deeds
Have compounded my thoughts?

My eye sockets are full of tears
My eyeballs seem to float
Like a capsized ship on the Nile
My face wrinkles, my throat sours.

My soul is lifted when I behold
The ambitious African youths
Strive to step into your large boots
In sublime admiration and mimicry

You fought like an Amazon
For Africa and her souls;
You didn't relent till
Your visions were written in gold.

It is heart-rending to say
Bye to you, but the reality
Has compelled me to do so.
Goodbye Pa Kofi Annan!!!

CHINEDU VINCENT OKORO
Nigeria.

KOFI ANNAN

Noble hearts are a few in numbers,
Who think international brotherhood and world peace;
Kofi Annan: The seventh UN Secretary General,
Tribute to the legend – my sincere wish.

Born on 8th April, Nineteen hundred and Thirty Eight,
In Kumasi, Ghana: an African Country;
Orb into a traditional chiefs of the *Fante*-tribe,
But became a diplomat to write history.

Had his early education in a leading School ,
And attended the College of Science and Technology ;
Studied economics at undergraduate, when he won a Ford Foundation Scholarship ,
And the Master's degree : he found it easy.

One of the most respected diplomats in the world ,
Rose to become the Secretary General of United Nations ;
The Founder of Kofi Annan Foundation to mobilize,
Threaten peace for development of human rights thoughts.

Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2001,
Along with the former UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon;
World peace is the main goal of the legend,
Spoke till his end to achieve peace soon.

All men are mortal, and Kofi Annan,
Passed away on 18th August 2018, at Bern Switzerland;
His name will be written in golden letters,
The noble hearts will be remembered, in every land.

SUDHIR KUMAR NANDA

UNTITLED

one long reel snipped short
so many stings
black mother cries
where is my sun
my sun with black roots
our light:
our churning blood he led
different colors, all of them
steady rivulets into organized streams ~
one large ocean,
where is the flower
our mothers cry
mothers whose breasts' flowers helped lactate
sturdy in the black soil,
petals spanning the ceramic blue
and pillow-whites
one rod we've lost today
let the races cower for
the lost cardinal point
watch flower mist at bright dawn
let the angels sing
the elements gyrate
a kin arrives
in the soft halls of bleeding hearts
a memory so full
symbol so large
focus for our gleaming eyes

EDOZIEM MIRACLE
Nigeria.

ASANTEHENE

Did you not find light?
Did you not sing and clap hands
with him singing tales at the moon-dance?
His face I remember, nothing too much:

Did you not take smiles home with you
While you slept empty stomach-ed, everything became so absent
It felt like drizzles of rain from an empty sky

Nights like that
Akosua would lament
How you've not given her your breath,
It would have been like the steps of trouble walking to the rivers

Did you not bring sunshine?
Did our hearts not sing you?
Did we not dance in celebration when the heavens shone light?
I heard mama cried of his son as king,
Asantehene she sobbed!

She cried about yesterday clasping both hands,
She had seen you praying your dreams,
Beating them like the drums of the *Asafo* warriors.
To her it was only yesterday....

EJAMIKE PRYNCE IFEANYI CHARLES
Nigeria.

YOU ARE LOVE

Many go silently
Into the night,
Roar loud
Don't lose your fight,
Courage was yours
When you said yes
To living here
In bliss and hell,
Sweetest souls
Shall touch your heart,
Spirits broken
Will make you shed
Many tears
Do not give in to the fear
Rise up like a warrior
My sister, brother, and friend
Grace stands by your side
Here till the end
When the end of days come
When silence reigns supreme
Know you were always loved
By me in every moment
Even as you lay defeated
Victory was yours, love was all you needed
Do not be silenced, do not fear the present
Breathe in the hope. And know...
You are love.

JAZ GILL
Canada

THIS SONG IS TOO HEAVY FOR MY LIPS TO CARRY

I'll bury my lines in this formless elegy,
I fear the lines behind scene than the one in it,
Why do the grave's mouth open each time our mother calls for a festival of peace & wine?
Why is death so weak that it kills and run?
Many lips have songs that never came out
& this were the tales told majestically in pains
of how you fought death to stay alive...
but the music was channeled wrongly,
Why do we have to wear this sorrow this time when the pleasures flow eastward?
Why do we have to write agony on the blank pages of time behind the future?
sometimes we remember ourselves in the dream not yet born, yet, we have to visit
places where legs are not allowed.
The other times we allow our shadows to bury our wandering thoughts in tears.
Howbeit you left when the sun is yet to shine?
Let's see your palms & brace up freedom;
for freedom is the call duty of jolted triumphs.
You are still awake, right? You are still living
Cos your breathing treatment of kindness
are the testament of brotherhood in blood!
Humanity is not too hollow to fight for you,
Heroes are not born, false, you one of them.
No human is hollowed in thought for your kind
But Let's sheath our knives,
those long drawn knives,
smoking with gore against death;
For we shall still meet to archive our embrace,
Sun our very emotions & feelings
& make dreams a stepping stone cold to get home.

till our blood connects to the dust of the African heroes reborn, the only prophecy
told in our history shall be void.

till eternity comes,

we hope to still keep you in our soul trading freedom and equality.

JOHN CHIZOBA VINCENT

Nigeria.

LIFE AFTER KOFI ANNAN

"All that glitters is not gold"
A philosophy that has expired.
Born and bred on the Gold Coast
The great African vanguard
Glittered his footsteps all around Terra.

The world is at war
A war driven by semblance
Like Boxer in the legendary Animal Farm
He fought tirelessly to dismantle
The "us" and "them" binary relationship.

Humanity's welfare lost a hero.
A hero that went toe to toe
With the vicious HIV and AIDS pandemic.
The war is still on-going
And your spirit witnesses the endless battle.

A discord musical genre annoyed you.
Its lyrics were of gunshots and mayhem.
Bearing a passion for peace
You only sang the tranquility melody
You only danced to peaceful instruments.

Today we mourn your death
As the gold that glittered the world has been exhausted.
We reminisce of the life ahead
Life after Kofi Atta Annan.

MANDHLA ASHLEY MAVOLWANE
Zimbabwe

DEPARTURE

(A dirge for Kofi Annan)

Oh African Hero, Annan!
You are like traffic: who
dedicates his life
standing at the middle of the road directing road users to various
directions. Just to avoid traffic crash

Suddenly, you fall silently
like a leaf on the ground
Leaving the tall tree
where we gradually grew yellowish from greenish

Tears shed were capable of filling two tanks
Both men and women from African and overseas mourn your death for days
You are gone, but your missions and works are alive

A brave diplomat
who fought for our peace
like a military man
against the dwellers of the land departs
Fighting for peace has been his job for years long. For that, he won
the Nobel Peace Prize

MUHAMMAD AUWAL IBRAHIM
Nigeria.

DID KOFI EVER DIED?

I have seen a man
Who but died
Yet he walks and lives among us
His name is Kofi

When Kofi was buried
Kofi returned home
With joy
When we saw Kofi
We cried thinking that he was a ghost
Kofi said "No, this is not a ghost but Kofi!"

Kofi advised us
On our moan and howl
That a good one does not die
But lives ever after his departed soul
Rather we should cry for our evil deeds
That might kill us after death

Kofi told us not to worry
Of his death but our ways
On what we hardly understand
May be after us

Today again I met Kofi on the road
When he gently passed by
I greeted Kofi
He responded amidst smiles
Since then I have been wondering
If Kofi ever died

OLATUNBOSUN TAOFECK
Nigeria

I DREAM OF PEACE

Lands untouched by war and the freedom to explore
A world in which we live in;
Not caged by concrete walls, and laws that suppress your dreams from within
I dream of listening to the still and the silent
A world free from violence
I dream of peace and tranquility
In a world free from greed and manpower;
Not plagued by poverty, I dream of peace
Where people are free to walk the earth,
Not bounded by laws of marriage or birth
I dream of a land that's free
Where no child has to cross the borders by risking their life at sea
Or held behind bars in a foreign country
Until granted asylum when one becomes a refugee
I dream of peace, for one to love, love without limitations
Love of all God's creations, a world free from starvation
I dream of peace, granting freedom, the freedom to grow
With no false promises of a new tomorrow
I dream of peace and equality
Not discriminated by religion, nor gender, or ethnicity
I dream of smiles and happy faces filled with pure light
To live freely on the earth because it should be one's human right
I dream of peace

SHARENA LEE SATTI
Bradford.

A MAN WE KNEW

We knew a man back in the land
Who shone among our kinsmen,
When the gong played from afar
His feet were found to dance
In harmony to our songs.
Kofi Annan
We knew the roots that pushed him forth
Out with the blood of his Black faith
The breasts his lips did suckle mourn.

Kofi Annan
A man we knew
Crossed the bar beyond this brook.
Must we drink or wail Africa?
Must we lose the chiefs of the land
To the hungry claws of the darkened one?
A man we knew has left the book
Kofi Annan
An ellipsis of good.

STAR OKPEH
Nigeria.

KOFI ANNAN

Knight Grand Cross Recipient
Outstanding Ghanaian Diplomat
Famous Secretary General of United Nations
International Civil Servant

Accomplished Chairman of The Elders
Noble Prize Winner
National and International Peace Promoter
Active Advocate of Human Rights
Noteworthy Scholar

JAWEED AHMED
Hyderabad, India.

WORLD ROLLS

The world rolls in a scrollbar
And the finger of providence, a cursor on the screen.
Life, a part of a wrong system is
What we often wear
So was it called a software.
Life is a programme to a destination
And it is hard to find where,
Shall we call it an hardware?
The world rolls in a website
And men log in with words
That often evoke tears
Such screaming can be called a password
Into the pages of life,
Memories are bookmarks,
Whatever man would like to know
Learning is the search engine.

MCCOY MAJOR GOLDING
Nigeria.

BECAUSE I DIED

Because I died
I stood on a cliff
Overlooking the depth of oblivion
With a basketful of wrongs to trash

Because I died
I became deaf
To the sounds of senseless pleasure,
The rotten cravings of the flesh

Because I died
The impending load was heaved off my shoulders,
A new experience of feathery weightlessness sets in
And freedom was assured

Because I died
I left grief for bliss,
Joy which sons of men have never known
Fluttered in my spirit

Because I died
My limitations were emitted,
Possibilities became limitless
And I could do all things

Because I died
I woke up a new creation
Gliding into eternity
Old things are passed away

Do not cry for me.

AZUBUIKE OKPALA
Abuja, Nigeria.

TO THAT MAN FROM KUMASI

Heard that Kumasi is a lovely town
Filled with flowers and gardens
And there being born
You must have grown like a flower too,
From that town at Gold coast
To MIT and then to UN
It must have been a long road,

How long was it?
Some thousand kilometers?
Some twenty years of walk?
Who thought a man from Kumasi
Would be at the helm?

And once you did so
You did what you should have done,
Oil - for - Food program,
Did it bring food for those who starved?
Those faces shrunk, those hollow eyes
With dreams shut out forever?
Those skeletal frames,
Just skin on bones,
Had it been the Achilles heel?

Who to judge?
Who to blame?

People fought as they always did,
Syria burned,
And you put a firm hand to douse the flame,
Did it burn within you and leave you singed?

You, the man from Kumasi
The city of gardens,
You did your best,
To end all conflicts,

Even after all your works were done
Even after you bade adieu to all,
You remain.

MOINAK DUTTA
India.

OF NIGHTS, GRIEF & GREY MEMORIES

There are nights
When our minds hijack the wheel
& leaves us wishing we could run
faraway from our bodies
There are times we dip our feet
In water hoping the cold will stay longer
To keep us from sleep,
Nightmare is the face of evil
Mirrors are no respecter of any person
& that's why they are frozen walls
Always reminding us of the beauty
In our scars knowing irony rings a bell,
Some nights kill us with silence too
& when we walk out into the woods
Facing our fears
It holds our hands
Rips them apart
Until they begin to bleed
Until we let out screams
Seeing the remains of a loved one
In a body of dirge
& trajecting ourselves into becoming
The stale figures of
Gray memories

MICHEAL ACE
Nigeria.

SUNSET BOULEVARD

Walking alone along the moonlit street
(‘twas such a deadly day)
the big buzzing Beehive was far behind,
the gentleman came up for air.

"Crimes clashes wars, battles & bombs
the tallest towers fall & crash on & on
our twin Earth is nearly choking
sisters& brothers are dying on a bloody floor.

I squeezed & hurt the best of myself
I did so little for mankind
may men & women be nearly equal now
I’m afraid the sun won’t shine.”

Suddenly surged a long gasp of wind
from far Ghana ‘twas a mother’s voice:
“Boy, your tongue married your best heart.
“Boy, go. ‘it is time to move on.”

ANNA MARIA DALL'OLIO
Italy.

LIGHT OF ANNAN

Your soft beam touches
the scars of earthly strife.

In the heavens you are
the cool wave of a Milky Way.

You are a moon
that shines brightly on
wars of brutality
choking light.

Your name is hope
a crush of crushed
bones
underneath the skin.

You are relief of monsoon
rains to parched souls
a silvery reflection
of light on the river's surface.

You are panacea,
a messiah of peace.

ASHOK BHARGAVA
Canada.

FRUSTRATED AUGUST

Ere that Saturday
In a frustrating month; August.
Thunder stormed, lightning stroked;
The sky wept for a while.

Flipping pages of the social media,
my electronic bride pronounced that
you stumble on a hardened rock and
fell into the arms of death, our unwanted friend.

Gobsmacked, in mid august an
April fool's day I think of.
But a righteous source it did come from –
BBC thus I was forced through
cracked walls to believe.

By your lost I beheld mountains uprooted.
Doves and pigeons coo as darkness
Overshadowed the outskirts of our land; Africa
and creatures beneath the Atlantic Oceans –
swallowed sugary tears.

In search of a better place for us black descendants
I believe, O Annan you left but for an errand –
Like Mandela and others; to purchase for us
a world we will call “falafina”
where we will be termed light and not dark
and there total liberation shall ever reign

*falafina is the land of blacks in the Mandingo dialect

AYOUBA TOURE
Liberia.

KOFI ANNAN

I heeded the call and clutched the quill
Before thinking through what I must tell
Of this dear beloved son of the soil of Ghana,
The seventh Secretary General of the United Nations,
The 2001 Nobel Peace Prize laureate
Kofi Annan, for whom the bell tolled
On the 18th of August in 2018?
What must I say? Oh, what must I tell?
So as to ill not a noble cause
And a man's noble deeds?
So I still my hand and shut my eyes,
And vividly I saw the great legend Kofi acting on a stage.
In his hand he had an olive branch,
And he rocked the world, giving world peace a chance!
And as I looked on in the deepest captivation of my being,
I thought of this:
The essences of the great Emperor
HaileSelassie's 1963 Address to the United Nations,
So sweetly echoed in song
By the late, great Bob Marley, titled "War."
Oh, what a heavy mantle you must have borne,
O son of Ghana's soil!
International peace, human rights, humanitarian aid,
And international laws were your goals,
Yet you were never confused in your roles.
In every scene you were at center stage
For the destination of man,
For a better world full of love and peace!
Rest in peace, O Son of the soil of Ghana!
O so noble your deeds! O so noble your cause

CURTIS GREASLEY
New York.

KOFI ANNAN IN “H-RAY VISION”

A global statesman, Kofi Annan, believed in
Humanity's potential with related peace-
And the soft-spoken patrician diplomat
At the United Nations, now expired, whom we dearly miss!
The headwind of our troubled and turbulent times
Is a constant reminder of his absence for sure -
Followed by his irresistible aura of radiant warmth,
The UN now has to endure!

Mr. Annan, the inner strength of ours and sense of hope
Came for the humanity from deep within-
The roots of Ghana, your place of birth,
And they moved you through thick and thin!
You led a hunger strike in your secondary school,
To protest against the quality of food-
And it demonstrated your determination well,
Leading to a classic change for good!

History will remember your impeccably tailored suit,
And goatee, enhanced by a graceful physique-
And your gentle voice made people smile,
Like a music does, although the words were tough and unique!
The Nobel Peace Prize (2001), and the title “Busumuru”* (2012),

Will reflect your name forever-
'cause you gave your life to build peace, and defend the voiceless
Who will forget you never!!

**Busumuru is one of the swords attached to the monarch's (King of Ghana) Golden Stool or throne.*

HILLOL RAY
Texas, USA.

LET THERE BE PEACE (A PRAYER TO PEACE)

Loving one other with all the forces that we could ever have
Holding hand by hand, the world wouldn't have been so sad
Lying underneath the glimmering stars up in the night sky
Make a wish upon our dreams ...laugh under rainbow's light

Maybe then a better and brighter tomorrow will come ahead if we all stick together
And altogether we are free, if we stop the rain of hatred that destroys humanity
If we find the true connection in reflective beliefs, we'll be stronger than ever
The hope that runs thin inside, like words of wisdom will be our Self-Discovery

It's about that time, to fulfill the embracing of ...HEARTS
And steal the promised air breeze from abundant might
That enlightens the soul beyond the untouched horizon
Healing the sleepy past lives by the learning to move on
Pursue the light of hope that'll lead you the way from dark
Within it are hidden whisperings that stretch to the shore
Talking like a pearl you can't buy, becoming one peace inside
Where the mists with its black sadness veil exist no more

There, where terrible echoes and memories don't burn deeply into your mind
Everything what once infected you will turn into something great and divine

There, where trust is the force toward the winds of change not to fall into ruin
If we put ourselves in each other's shoes, love every face...a new start will begin
Only then we'll reach a place full of love, the liberty that has never been told
One peace with no abandonment like violin's notes, served in the pot of gold
Then with a million voices rising to worlds uniting, singing softly the anthem
The history will be a journey to see if we all fight hard for a piece of freedom

IRIDA ZUSI
Lezha, Albania.

THIS SUN WILL NOT SET UNTIL A NEW ONE EMERGES

This sun will not set until a new one emerges
This ink will not dry up until the rock is cracked
This story will not end until a new moon emerges
And when darkness promises to cast its shadows
On the blurring face of the sky
Our torchbearer's Olympic flame shall not burn out
His flame will ignite to unite all sons of Adam
This sun will not set until Kofi has had his dinner
And secured his seat in a conference of ancestors
So that when we gather to count the twinkling stars
On the jolly face of the sky,
We would read the inscriptions,
Coded in our hearts and memories for ages.

JAGUNLABI KODEMAN
Lagos, Nigeria.

RAY OF HOPE

This is your lament O Africa!
How hath your star fallen from your sky?
How are the mighty fallen?
In myth and prowess.

The morning started so bright
But was soon deter with a blot,
Our Ray of hope is gone
Kofi, is now a dream of the night.

Since childhood, when he drank the stream water,
Till his teenage, when he tills the land like a fox ,
Kofi, the epitome of the shinning black,
Stood steadfast with motherhood.

During his juvenility,
Kofi, is an unmoved mountain,
Strong like the wave of the Euphrates
Steadfast like the Everest .

Amidst the white lamb,
He is a black lad showing intellect,
They look unto him and were lightened .

Together our eyes will swim in our tears,
To remember your valiance and courage,
Your star will forever sit beside our moon,
To light the path of our children.

JOHNSON VICTOR
Nigeria.

BUT FOR HIS LIMITATIONS AS HUMAN

Yes, God created the world in six days
Kofi Annan could not transform the UN in six weeks
Of course, God is God and Kofi Annan was human
God was and still is in a unique position
Kofi Annan was in a human situation
And has now passed into transition

God has no known UN Security Council
Kofi Annan had more than Security Council
God has no known nation with a veto power
Kofi Annan had five nations with veto powers

Kofi Annan battled for a world of peace and harmony
A world that knows no weapons of mass destruction
A world that knows no undue anguish and refugees
But alas!

Kofi Annan served humanity with humility
He tried to concretize peace and unity for mankind
United Nations recognized his humanitarian spirit
And made him co-recipient of Nobel Peace Prize 2001

God was and still is the Creator
Kofi Annan was a mortal
Thus he traversed the portal
As a seed planted by a man
In the womb of a woman
He was interred in a tomb

God endowed him with wisdom
BUT FOR HIS LIMITATIONS AS HUMAN
He could have done more for mankind
May his noble soul dwell in PROFOUND PEACE!

MAWUTODZI KODZO ABISSATH
Ghana.

MAMA WEEPS

An August visitor that visited in August
Taking away the breath of a god,
Silencing the body of a deity
Stopping the movement of a legend.
Woe betide this visitor
Wicked, heartless and ungodly
Desperate, inhumane and merciless
Devastating, destroying and cruel.

So loud a voice, so black a brother
So enthusiastic, a comrade
So selfless, a servant
Vast, conversant and familiar
So African, a creature.
Mama weeps for Kofi
She wails for her dear son
She mourns for her glory
Oh, Africa weeps.

A formidable force, a soldier
Combatant, vigilant, brilliant and gallant
Fearless, brave, bold and courageous
Stunning, astonishing and captivating
Boundless, unwavering, and unbeatable
Unmatchable, adorable and incredible
So indescribable, a knight.

Loyal and humble
Non-discriminating, non-segregating
A coach of selfless service.
A captain of virtuous strength

A winner of crystal war,
A king of hopeful future
A leader of energetic generation.

Mama weeps, Africa recounts
Dear Kofi, Mama weeps
The world will never be the same.
Goodnight, Big Brother
Goodnight Son
Goodnight, A Giant of Africa.

NGOZI OLIVIA OSUOHA
Nigeria.

WEEPING AND CONSOLING

We need not tangle our cognitions
On bottomless ratiocination; whether you're gone,
Or what Certitude did was mimicry of shadow.
No, we must stand on the edge of our dialectic:
Between man as germ and as dust!
Your death protrudes a branchy elm
Of thoughts in our brains; each bough
Striving to outgrow the other.
A man of regimented civility; a wavelength of wit;
Man as what he is by Nature: soil progeny.

But a re-show of your life in cosmic scene
Reflects rainbow reminding the cosmos
That it once rained in Africa and elsewhere...
It's not yester-precipitation whose squall
Almost obliterated our ancient silhouettes.
The fecund soil of Africa percolates
When it's not raining; something has happened
To your placid land - the riddle of Time.
Kofi Annan, Africa is weeping and grinning;
Nature mourns you; all its denizens are at home!

But an arcane voice reiterates:
"How men die is a discrete sylvan life;
Study the trees three hundred years or more,
Look at newly-grafted trees in Africa and alien land,
Listen intently to coos, chirps and hoots of birds;
Look at the moon and stars in the night sky;
Look at the epigraph on world's placard;

Look into humanity's vein... you'll find
Kofi Annan flowing as its corpuscle;
Then you'll weep not, but console one another!"

GODWIN NKET-AWAJI ALPHEAUS
Nigeria.

TRIBUTE TO ANNAN

The struggles and conflicts were so many
You stood firm to solve them, laying them flat
One after the other.
Wars escalating in Somalia,
Crimes sprouting in Rwanda,
All life a wake you stood for peace,
When murders were heard off in Kenya, [2008],
The conflicts of Sudan,
Never did you sit back.
O African father,
Africans will miss you forever,
Not a page can describe your works
Not a book can either,
But jots of your work reside all the lands
The people's interest you stood for,
Bearing in mind that blacks are underrated,
Father, you make Africa proud,
Teaching humanity that suffering anywhere corners people everywhere
Tirelessly, those working towards global peace,
RIP African father

PIOUS KIRU
Uganda.

ODE TO A PEACE ICON

Our eyes were flooded with tears,
tears for the passage of the people's scribe
Kofi Annan the global peace icon
Assembled in Ghana
Transported to the world
For impactful services to humanity
Like the golden fish
You're brought out amongst others
Clothed with the garment of history
So you moved from story to glory
Many may have queried your boldness
But none could fault your oracular prowess
Some even doubted your excellence
But none could fault your steadfastness
With foresight and intelligence
You served the world religiously
The aroma of your contribution is every where
For those that still retain their sense of smell
You're the visitor every nation would love to host
Leader, teacher and a mentor
You have fought a good fight
You've finished the race
It's only posterity that can reward your forthrightness.

OLADELE BABAJAMU
Nigeria.

SLEEP TO LIVE AGAIN

When darkness covers the sky,
The birds must return to their roosts.
When the night topples the day,
The sun must take cover under clouds.
No matter how the market blooms,
Merchants will all return home at night.
No matter how sweet a journey may be,
Pilgrims will find their way home.
You left for the noon, and never returned at night.

Forever, your memory will remain with us,
As the moonlight remains in the sky.

In the sky, on the sea, in the garment of the birds that fly;
We shall paint the colors of your rainbow
and it will never fade forever.
Good night, to a peace maker; sleep to live again!

OLANIYI OLOLADE
Nigeria.

FOR THE MISSING MAN

Yesterday we danced around the bridges of time;
These dances are of nitty-gritty,
We were elated for we thought in seven moons to come
We would see again our Kofi and call him,
Ask him of paradise, if angels are truly roped in white garments...
So at seven day moon, all feet reposed at the verge of his tomb;
Cuddle our grief so close to our heart.
We cried not but tears traversed down our cheeks
And alighted at a juncture in our chins.
For if we had known that life has left the dead,
We'd have danced a sober dance and made no mournful joy.
Alas! Our men have gone home and in our home, there are no longer rooms- death
keeps trailing, we cannot hide.
Kofi! Tell *Awoonor* that at his death, we find words for not anymore,
Convey to Nkrumah that his thoughts are taught but right in our eyes, they all
amount to tort.
Kofi, rest on the rose of peace...

OLOLADE AKINLABI IGE
Nigeria.

KOFI ANNAN

A worthy son of Ghana, a worthier ward of the people's world over
Still the worthiest son of human dignity
He mastered love, peace and human rights,
Proclaimed: No walls can separate human dignity.

As a noble General of United Nations,
He drank peace, ate peace and slept peaceful
A Nobel laureate for peace,
He placed humanity always at the center of everything
sweeter, Sang the anthem of democracy:
Let peace and progress flourish across all the states,
Let not sovereignty shield violation of human rights.
Vanquish! Vanquish! Vanquish!

A lover of unity,
Hammered the new demon of insecurity that cripples today's mind;
States, irrespective of status or wealth, a victim to its lethal powder
Hence awake and arise the Nations of the world
Crush all borders, as humanity like a mother, knows no divisions.

Beloved Kofi Annan pays a golden salutation to peace
With nobel medal of gold in raised hands
As peace needs a greater parade than bronze (salutations to heroic battles)

A true champion of human values, to demolish the new border
That exists between the rich and the poor
The privileged and the humiliated.

He flaps from above his dove's wings
Echoing peace and kiss across all lines
Singing the new anthem: Vanquish, Vanquish, Vanquish.....

PRAFULLA SAHU

BABIES ARE BETTER UNBORN

As kids, our eyes spoke before we understood mysteries of words wrapped in our tongues. We, stitched in innocence and love -a mirage, don't live at birth, we survive. Man is born with epistles to write -about the void he came from. Choose Heaven or Hell. Heaven!! Its tempo rides my chest and its rhythm caresses my tongue. Too good to sound real; riding in an atheist cloak. Hell! Too dark and gory, but black is my favorite color says the black boy. Praying in heaven, fucking in hell. Babies are better unborn, the first breath corrupts their innocence, in anger they cry when forced out... Push!! Push!!. We birth babies to exist but they don't need us, life, love, death, so we force them out to the balcony of their mother's womb and shut them out. Little wonder every man walks sideways into the room he crept out from, physically or psychologically.

UMEH MARTINS SOMADINA

A TRIBUTE TO THE BLACK GEM

...and he draws his curtain to our span;
The green soul of the Black race;
a golden Shepherd
and the pride of our Savannahs.
Silenced! Yet, you rewrite for you, a gallant
memoir whose voice shall trumpet to the world
unborn.

To life you speak of your emeralds,
your legend, and the beauties of your sun,
and to your Horn,
may your silence, I pray God,
slay to every corner, the nights
upon dark brotherhood.

To tributaries unknown through your
stream confluence:
a debt owed by all things,
You were not only born,
You did not just breathe;
You were the petals of the rose and
a constellation of stars.

Beyond your 80 lifespan,
You are forever on earth a noble soul
and to your Black Race, a man of the people;

and with a flood-filled face,
fare thee well, I bid,
Legend of our noble ancestry.

VICTOR IGIRI ADIRAHU
Nigeria.

I MISS YOU

It's 2am in the late hours of the night,
Silence has befallen my city
You could drop a nail and still hear it yourself.

Everyone else is dead asleep
Only for the tireless truck drivers with countless burdens
that have to meet the boarders by dawn.
Their vehicles can really roar!

Coiled in the corner of the couch, bored & munching dry bread
I steal a glimpse of one star shinning more than the rest
And I wonder if that's you watching me from there
I remember how you made me smile every morning
Like a lamb I always woke up and rushed to greet you
Rushing for roasted g. nuts and cold millet
I miss you so much my hero

VIVIENNE ARINDA
Uganda.

ANNAN: THE SOWER OF PEACE

[your] time fast swung out of joint
the wind swallowed your breath
and, across the sea, blew your soul
to meet the maker at heaven's gate.

and we, like desperate nestlings, wept
after the *iroko* tree~ our shelter, our peace & our love~ fell
and rendered us vulnerable to seduction
of evil men.

we let go your breath, but hold close memories
of your tongue, that seduced a cat to share a bowl with a mouse at your dignified
table of diplomacy
when their appetites had torn the Kenyan dream
and threatened the roof of our house to cave in
in the wake of 2008 bloodbath.

we let go your breath, but hold close memories
of your hands drumming peace & love
for Syria and Darfur
birthing the great Israel & tailoring civilian rule in Calabar
to allow earth children therein
savor the joy of being born free.

Attah, we can't sing enough songs of praise
To describe how colorful a great man's life is
But the seed you sowed in our hollow hearts
the trumpet you blew in the midst of flying bullets, stones & abuses
assured our dreams of eminent blossom.

WAFULA P'KHISA
Kenya.

THE VISION

Of Kumasi from the Golden coast rose
The African pride, the vision from roots,
Ashanti and *Fante* tribunal clan crafts
A hope, that green tardy upshot thriving
In the gaze of Kofi Annan, Victor of ages
The foregone brave lion of Africa mourn

Lament the loudest the left cub, for him
Africa had been bliss. Beat the drums
Brew the sour African beer, fill concern
Yet draw consciously the spoiled canvas
While the left hand grabs the fine brushes of
Liberty, Peace and tranquility as of him.

And that dream of remaking human rights
Reserved for all in his mighty, pandemic
Solutions he brought on board, Africa he
Posted a smile once more, engulfed many
Of the brotherly genocides, HIV drawn off
To the precincts of the domains, Lament...

As the lowlife diarist has scribed in agony,
Pained by the demise of the comrade too
Bare it in minds that the vision it sowed as
Activism not in skepticism, Lament Africa
In hope of Kofi Annan fruits to yield too
And let not dust be blinding as we dig...

WILSON WAISON TINOTENDA
Zimbabwe.

UNTITLED

Busy people, crowded streets
Happy faces masking feats.
Behind the calm is a wildfire.
Behind the smile you'll find empty sighs.
Tired souls crying in silence
As injustice covers the scenes.
Where poverty lurks not in the dark but
In the spark of broad daylight
With faded colors and scars
Only a victim can describe.
The flames that burns
Away from prying eyes
The lips that sing behind closed doors
Where even cassava flakes
Find no succor from the wrap
Of scented stews.
A child born with joy
To a father with nothing to own
Now homes mixed emotions,
Happiness fenced with walls of sadness
A lot is hidden behind the scenes
Of every home, smile and tears,
What keeps the soul in one piece,
A soul with no hope in a stormy weather is
A thread of hope, a needle of chance
A stitch brimming with life
To hold its pieces together knowing
The sun will shine again
At another chance, another day.

WOLI BUKOLA KAFILAH
Nigeria.

AN AFRICAN STAR

Gentle with a universal love
Rising from the valleys and hills of Africa,
To the great fountain in America,
And he became a gallant fellow,
He built hives
With black smoke,
He created awareness for
HIV, poverty fights,
He became a legend,
And when he died,
He left behind, a legacy,
His name.

Always ring a bell
Though his body lying still,
He impacted the world,
With devotion and his colorless intelligence,.
It showered the world with an endless love
And admirations from above,
The creator had to call him,
As he impacted peace,
So will his soul rest in peace.

YVONNE ATUKUNZIRE
Uganda.

NABAD GELYO, KOFI

–good bye

Kofi, our farewell
is a song riding on
the road of tears. We are
mourners by your gravestone, each
tear, a tale of your memory; each
sneeze and cough
a story lurking in
our hearts forever.

Kofi, our farewell is
in parts. Today, we
are helpless
kids –wailing, missing the
presence of thy cool
eyes that sing of
peace; and your mortal
lips that teach us
wisdom.

Farewell, forever father
for thy love is a seed, sprouting
on the hectare
of our
h
e
a
r
t.

Kofi, –*nabadgelyo*!

RIDWAN ADELAJA
Hargeisa, Somalila.

TRIBUTE

Time wiggled chariots....
Kofi died to live
as history remains;

Ringin in the depth
of our hearts like a hip-hop jams
entwine in a disco room.

Incredibly, his words now become
lights to our darkened paths,
&

Both in birth and death,
Kofi's name is the fire
that burns deep in our bones.

Undeniable, he has written his name
on the walls of our hearts
through his deeds;

To be remembered as
long as the sun spreads
her tentacles.

"Enchantment is over,
but the spell remains"
- Live on Kofi Atta Annan!

TIMILEYIN G. OLAJUWON
Abuja, Nigeria.

~ Essay ~

TRIBUTE TO KOFI ANNAN

In today's world, it always seems like people are just passing through; going through each day with nothing to hope for and nothing to aspire for. We are like machines; we don't feel anymore, we don't empathize.

In every generation, a rare pearl is born –a leader; a friend; an inspiration. This person is always completely different among the crowd. From the time the late Kofi Annan was a boy, he stood out from the rest. All who saw or heard him speak knew he was destined for greatness. Even when the path was marred with hardships, and there were dangerous oceans to cross, his determination was not deterred, and he gracefully navigated his way through every challenge.

Rarely, do we stumble on people (nowadays) who are selfless but he was. He served others not because he wanted the world's praise, not because his goal was to have monuments built in his honor or songs and books written in his memory. His interest wasn't in fame, but it was because it reminded all of us to be human and to care for others as we would want them to care for us if the roles were reversed. He loved others the way he wanted to be enjoyed.

In Kofi's resolute understanding when you educate a woman, you educate a nation. He fought hard to protect the minorities and marginalized groups because he envisioned a world held together by love and peace instead of one ravished and torn apart by war. He understood that it is the women and children that suffer the most and he foresaw how dangerous this is to a generation. My love for him because Kofi believed that a lot of conflicts could be solved by dialogue and there was no need to take up arms and shed innocent blood. He knew that a gentle answer could turn away wrath and calm the roaring lion. He taught us all the right way to deal with misunderstandings.

He was a leader who showed us that leadership meant sacrifice and that sometimes it is all right to have bad days as long as we can get back again and dust ourselves off

before trying still. He taught us that we shouldn't give up on our dreams or those of others. We are here to help each other up and to support those who are less fortunate than we are.

He showed us that we are one family regardless of our skin-color, sex, religion or origin. For all of us, red-blood runs through our veins. This fact alone should make us look at each other with eyes of compassion.

Kofi has indeed run his race well. He is a true man of might and valor. We can only pray that many strong men be raised to wear his shoes and continue his race.

Kofi, for the peacemaker you were, the diplomat, the teacher, the leader, the friend, the colleague, we honor you! Thank you for sharing your light with us.

KIRABO PATIENCE SENYONGA

Uganda.

THE GREAT STATESMAN

"Suffering anywhere concerns people everywhere" Kofi Anan learned this powerful quote during his mid-teens when he attended an elite Methodist boarding school called Mfantipim, he was a passionate advocate of human rights.

Kofi Atta Annan was born into an aristocratic family in the year 1938 on April 8; he was born within minutes of his twin sister, Elufa Atta in Kumasi Ghana. He was a grandchild and nephew of three tribal chiefs. Annan went to Mfantipim in the year 1954 and graduated in the year 1957 the same year Ghana got independence from Britain, the first British African colony to do so. "It was an exciting period," Annan once told The New York Times. "People of my generation, having seen the changes that took place in Ghana, grew up thinking all was possible."

Annan went on to pursue higher education. In 1958, Annan began studying economics at the Kumasi College of Science and Technology, now the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology of Ghana. He received a Ford Foundation grant, enabling him to complete his undergraduate studies in economics at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota, United States, in 1961. Annan then completed DEA degree in International Relations at The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland, from 1961-62. After some years of work experience, he studied at the MIT Sloan School of Management (1971-72) in the Sloan

Fellows program and earned a master's degree in management. Annan was fluent in English, French, Akan, and some Kru languages as well as other African languages.

Kofi started his career at UN with the first job as administrative and budget officer in World Health Organisation in 1962, From 1974 to 1976, he worked as a manager of the state-owned Ghana Tourist Development Company in Accra. In 1980 he became the head of personnel for the office of the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva. In 1983 he became the director of administrative management services of the UN Secretariat in New York. In 1987, Annan was

appointed as an Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management and Security Coordinator for the UN system. In 1990, he became Assistant Secretary-General for Program Planning, Budget and Finance, and Control. When Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali established the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in 1992, Annan was appointed to the new department as Deputy to then Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding. Annan was subsequently appointed in March 1993 as Under-Secretary-General of that department.

The United Nations Security Council recommended Annan to replace the former secretary-general, Dr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali of Egypt, in later 1996. The General Assembly voted in his favor, and he began his first term as secretary-general on January 1, 1997. He was the first from Sub Sahara African to hold this position also first to be elected from the ranks of UN staff. One of Mr. Annan's main priorities as Secretary-General was a comprehensive programme of reform aimed at revitalizing the United Nations and making the international system more effective. Key proposals included the introduction of strategic management to strengthen the unity of purpose, the establishment of the position of Deputy Secretary-General, The rule of law, the Millennium Development Goals.

In 2000, Annan issued a report entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the 21st century". The report called for member states to "put people at the center of everything we do. No calling is nobler, and no responsibility greater than that of enabling men, women, and children, in cities and villages around the world, to make their lives better. In the final chapter of the report, Annan called to "free our fellow men and women from the abject and dehumanizing poverty in which more than 1 billion of them are currently confined". At the Millennium Summit in September 2000, national leaders adopted the Millennium Declaration, which was subsequently implemented by the United Nations Secretariat as the Millennium Development Goals in 2001.

He sought to bring the Organization closer to the global public by forging ties with civil society, the private sector, and other partners. At Mr. Annan initiative the UN peacekeeping was strengthened which enable them to cope

with a rapid rise in the number of operations and personnel.

Mr. Annan appointed the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations. The panel was composed of individuals experienced in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and peace building. The report it produced, which became known as the Brahimi Report, after Chair of the Panel Lakhdar Brahimi.

- 1) Renewed political commitment on the part of Member States;
- 2) Significant institutional change;
- 3) Increased financial support.

The Panel further noted that to be effective, UN peacekeeping operations must be properly resourced and equipped, and operate under clear, credible and achievable mandates. It was also at Mr. Annan's urging that, in 2005, Member States established two new intergovernmental bodies: the Peace building Commission and the Human Rights Council. Mr. Annan likewise played a central role in the creation of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the adoption of the UN's first-ever counter-terrorism strategy, and the acceptance by the Member States of the "responsibility to protect" people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. His "Global Compact" initiative, launched in 2000, has become the world's largest effort to promote corporate social responsibility. It is a principle-based framework for businesses which aims to "Catalyse actions in support of broader UN goals, such as the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs)."The Compact established ten core principles in the areas of human rights, labor, the environment, and anti-corruption, and under the Compact, companies commit to the ten principles and are brought together with UN agencies, labor groups, and civil society to implement them effectively.

His approach to crisis was always in a calm and civilized manner; he was reserved and disciplined on the one hand and on other he could be kind of playful. No one questioned his commitment to promoting justice, universal human rights, peace, and development, to make the world a better place and not to surrender to cynicism. Idealism, however, was not enough and Annan combined the qualities of an accomplished diplomat and experienced administrator of notoriously labyrinthine bureaucracy. Annan's sense of real politik about how the world works were perhaps his greatest asset. Annan tenure with a job in UN was not less with controversies before becoming UN Secretary-General he had headed the UN's peacekeeping department when the Rwandan genocide of 1994 was the worst such episode since the Holocaust. Annan was given a warning about the impending genocide attack. He denied the signal was specific, but later he expressed regret over the inaction.

In 2004, ten years after the genocide in which an estimated 800,000 people were killed, Annan said, "I could and should have done more to sound the alarm and rally support. "The painful memories influenced much of my thinking, and many of my actions, as Secretary-General," he had once remarked. During his tenure as secretary general of UN, there was an enormous crisis in the world like 9/11, Iraq war, Oil for Food. He faced all these crises with his extraordinary calm and with such assurance. He had an enormous amount of charm and terrific political instinct.". In the year of 2001, Kofi Annan was awarded Nobel peace prize for his work on human rights, UN reforms and also for his commitment to world peace.

In the year 2006, he got retired from the post-UN Secretary General. He stayed in Geneva and worked in various humanitarian endeavors, He established a foundation called Kofi Annan Foundation in the year 2007, an independent, non - profit organization promoting better global governance and strengthen the capacities of people and countries to achieve a fairer, more peaceful world, He was also chairman of The Elders, an international organization founded by Nelson Mandela. He was a proud son of Ghana, Great statesman, Visionary; He was a man of deep moral conviction, compassion, and grace, He brought UN closer to people, helped the United Nations realize its potential to improve the lives of people everywhere.

I conclude this article with some lines from the speech he gave while receiving the Nobel prize "A genocide begins with the killing of one man - not for what he has done, but because who he is. A campaign of ' ethnic cleansing ' begins with one neighbor turning on another. Poverty

begins when one child is denied his or her fundamental right to education. What starts with a failure to uphold the dignity of one life, all too often ends with a calamity for entire nations ".

References from Wikipedia: kofi Annan memoirs, the tributes, the kofi Annan foundation.

JISHA VISWANATHAN
India.



We need to think of the future and the planet we are going to leave to our children and their children... Therefore, I urge all leaders of the world for the sake of their own people, to seize every opportunity to put an end to isolation, racism, nepotism and conflict and thereby embracing Peace.

- Kofi Atta ANNAN.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE KOFI ATTA ANNAN

PERSONAL LIFE

Kofi Annan was born in Kumasi, Ghana, on 8 April 1938. He is married to Nane and between them they have three children and five grandchildren. Kofi A. Annan was the 7th Secretary-General of the United Nations and was the founder and chair of the Kofi Annan Foundation. In 2001, he and the United Nations were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace and was praised for being “pre-eminent in bringing new life to the organization.” (Norwegian Nobel Committee, October 2001). He died on the 18th of August 2018 at the age of 80 in hospital in Bern, Switzerland, after a brief illness. He had been active in his Foundation’s work right up to his unexpected end

POST-UN LIFE

Kofi Annan established the Kofi Annan Foundation as a catalyst for lasting peace and inclusive governance by anticipating looming threats security, development and human rights. With the Foundation, Annan then elaborated

solutions and set in motion the political will to see these solutions implemented. In early 2008, he led the African Union’s Panel of Eminent African Personalities, which mediated a peaceful resolution to post-election violence in Kenya.

From February to August 2012, he was the UN-Arab League Joint Special Envoy for Syria, mandated to seek a resolution to the conflict there. Mr. Annan was the founding Chairman of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), which works for a food secure and prosperous Africa by promoting rapid, sustainable agricultural growth based on smallholder farmers. AGRA's programmes invest in soil regeneration and health, improved seeds, access to markets, and building capacity and investment throughout the agricultural value-chain. He chaired the African Progress Panel until the end of 2017, which advocated at the highest level for equitable and sustainable development in Africa. He was a member of The Elders, an independent group of global leaders who work together for peace and human rights, and in 2013 was appointed its Chair.

Kofi Annan was also Chancellor of the University of Ghana and held a number of positions at Universities around the world. He was a board member, patron or honorary member of a number of organisations, including the United Nations Foundation. Kofi Annan's widely acclaimed memoir: *Interventions: A Life in War and Peace* was published in 2012. Kofi Annan chaired the Global Commission on Elections, Democracy and Security (March 2011 to September 2012) and in January 2013, launched the West Africa Commission on Drugs, as a response to the surge in drug trafficking and consumption in West Africa and their impact on security, governance and public health.

From September 2016 to September 2017, Mr Annan chaired the Advisory Commission on Rakhine State. The Advisory Commission on Rakhine State was founded as a neutral and impartial body which aims to propose concrete measures for improving the welfare of all people in Rakhine state. It is was a joint venture of the Government of Myanmar and of the Kofi Annan Foundation.

In his last 2 years, under the helm of his Foundation, Kofi Annan launched projects to safeguard elections and

democracy in the digital age, but also to promote youth leadership in the face of violent extremism, and to ensure that peace processes really produce lasting peace. Lastly, he advocated for agriculture that serves the poorest and emphatically warned against the dangers of climate change. With his Foundation, Kofi Annan supported countries facing difficult elections such as Nigeria, Mexico, Malaysia, Cameroun and Zimbabwe.

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

Kofi Annan was UN Secretary General from January 1997 to December 2006. One of his main priorities during this period was a comprehensive programme of reform that sought to revitalize the United Nations and make the international system more effective. He was a constant advocate for human rights, the rule of law, the Millennium Development Goals and Africa, and sought to bring the organisation closer to the global public by forging ties with civil society, the private sector and other partners. At Mr. Annan's initiative, UN peacekeeping was strengthened in

ways that enabled the United Nations to cope with a rapid rise in the number of operations and personnel. It was also at Mr. Annan's urging that, in 2005, Member States established two new intergovernmental bodies: the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council.

Mr Annan likewise played a central role in the creation of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the adoption of the UN's first-ever counter-terrorism strategy, and the acceptance by Member States of the "responsibility to protect" people from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. His "Global Compact" initiative, launched in 1999, has become the world's largest effort to promote corporate social responsibility. Mr. Annan undertook wide-ranging diplomatic initiatives. In 1998, he helped to ease the transition to civilian rule in Nigeria. In the same year, he visited Iraq to resolve an impasse between Iraq and the Security Council over compliance with resolutions on weapons inspections and other matters; this effort helped to avoid an outbreak of hostilities which was imminent at that time.

In 1999, he was deeply involved in the diplomatic process that led to Timor-Leste's independence from Indonesia. He was responsible for certifying Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon in 2000, and in 2006 his efforts contributed to securing a cessation of hostilities between Israel and Hizbollah. Also in 2006, he mediated a settlement of the dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria over the Bakassi peninsula. Mr Annan's efforts to strengthen the Organisation's management, coherence and accountability

involved major investments in training and technology, the introduction of a new whistle-blower policy and financial disclosure requirements, and steps to improve co-ordination at country level. Early career Kofi Annan joined the UN system in 1962 as an administrative and budget officer with the World Health Organization in Geneva.

He later served with the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, the UN Emergency Force (UNEF II) in Ismailia, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Geneva, and in various senior posts in New York dealing with human resources, budget, finance, and staff security. Immediately before becoming

Secretary-General, he was Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping. Kofi Annan facilitated the repatriation from Iraq of more than 900 international staffs and other non-Iraqi nationals (1990) and also served as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the former Yugoslavia and Special Envoy to NATO (1995-1996).

Source: <https://www.kofiannanfoundation.org/kofi-annan/biography/>

We need to think of the future and the planet we are going to leave to our children and their children... Therefore, I urge all leaders of the world for the sake of their own people, to seize every opportunity to put an end to isolation, racism, nepotism and conflict and thereby embracing Peace.



Kofi Annan

Kofi Annan Tributes

In a breath, everything around Kofi became silent. Silence reached out of his head and enfolded him in its martyred arms. It swayed the world to the rhythm of an ancient, foetal heartbeat. Silence sent its stealthy, suckered tentacles inching along the layers of his skull, hovering the knolls and dells of his memory, dislodging painful sentences, whisking them off the tip of his tongue. Silence stripped Kofi's thoughts of the words that described them and left them pared and naked. Unspeakable. Slowly, Kofi withdrew from the world. He grew accustomed to the uneasy octopus that lived inside him and squirted its inky sedative on his past – the wars he tried to stop, the families he re-united, the relationships he rebuilt. Gradually the reason for his silence was unblanketed – Kofi won by dying!

A refreshingly bookish meal of tribute, this compilation offers poignant details of a man whose life revolved around an ailing world in need of therapy. It is a reflection of the very day the atmosphere became darkened as Kofi's whistles tapered to a halt and the sky began to clap and grumble. Then raindrop began to hit the roof, lizard scampered for cover, Kofi was gone and the gods laughed at grief.

Obajeun Jonah Ayodele
Kofi Annan Foundation Scholar