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U.N. sends chief in hopes to resolve conflict

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — U.N. chief Kofi Annan will head to Baghdad to try to resolve the conflict with Iraq, but Washington has warned that it will not accept a settlement that doesn't give U.N. inspectors full access to all weapons sites.

After several days of intense negotiations, the United States gave its conditional endorsement Tuesday for the trip, which could be the last chance to solve the crisis peacefully.

The secretary-general announced his decision just hours after President Clinton laid the groundwork for a possible air strike, saying in a televised speech that the U.S. military is ready to carry out its mission and "the American people have to be ready as well."

"We wish Annan well. He is a very good diplomat," U.S. Ambassador Bill Richardson said today on ABC's "Good Morning America." Still, he added, "We want to make it very clear we have the right to oppose a potential deal that would harm our national interest."

Annan said he made the decision to travel to Iraq on his own, but said he has the support of all five permanent members of the Security Council — the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China — which must ratify any deal.

Annan said he did not ask for a mandate from the permanent members but did seek clear direction about what he could discuss with the Iraqis.

"What I wanted was an understanding and a basis that will help my mission and make it successful and that if I come back, that everybody will be on board," Annan said.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin said today the visit was "extremely important," the ITAR-Tass news agency reported, quoting presidential spokesman Sergei Yastrzhembsky.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Valery Nesterushkin said Annan's visit would not be the last chance for a peaceful settlement, according to the Interfax news agency.

Diplomatic sources said the per-

manent members remained divided over details of a possible settlement.

The inspectors must certify Iraqi compliance before the council will lift crippling economic sanctions imposed in 1990, when Saddam Hussein's troops invaded Kuwait, touching off the 1991 Gulf War.

Iraq claims it has destroyed all banned weapons and that the special commission has deceived the council to keep the sanctions in place.

Annan's decision to travel came after ambassadors from the United States, France, Britain, Russia and China met several times in the past week to try to narrow their differences.

Several formulas have been proposed. One would have inspectors from the special commission, known as UNSCOM, be accompanied by diplomats on visits to presidential sites.

Others would have Annan appoint a new group of inspectors, some of which could be from UN-

Presidential palace

Locations of the eight Iraqi presidential compounds



SCOM. Iraq has also insisted on a 60-day time-limit for inspectors, something the United States and Britain have rejected.

Dark side of Deng's legacy deepens after his death

BEIJING (AP) — Spotting the green-uniformed police, two dozen scruffy-looking men fled their daily chore of seeking work.

"Finding a job is really hard," one breathless fugitive, a farmer named Cui, said before hurdling over the side of an overpass and scurrying down a bank to seek cover under the bridge.

Job-seeking migrants such as Cui are among the most common byproducts of China's reforms. Crowding into already clogged cities by the tens of millions, they form the darker side of a legacy that has raised skyscrapers and incomes across what was one of the world's poorest countries.

In the year since the Feb. 19, 1997, death of reformist patriarch Deng Xiaoping, the unintended ef-

fects of his two-decade effort have worsened. Corruption remains rampant, gaps between the newly rich and bedrock poor are widening, unemployment is soaring and social ills such as prostitution and drug abuse are spreading.

"Deng Xiaoping was the architect, but he solved only the problems of the first period of reform. He left behind a lot of other ones for his successors to solve," said Wang Shan, an author and political commentator.

A man of Deng's revolutionary credentials and achievements commands influence even in death, and his political heirs in the ruling Communist Party are not letting Thursday's anniversary of his passing go quietly.

In ways solemn and kitsch, Chi-

na is celebrating the man and the statesman. Stamps, video compact discs and books bearing his likeness and words are being produced. Symposiums on his policies are being held. Even an exhibition of portraits done in needlepoint embroidery has been staged.

"We stand on the great man's shoulders. The great man's shoulders carry the hopes of one people," intoned the party's flagship newspaper, *People's Daily*, in a front-page homage Wednesday.

The thrust behind the memorials, syrupy, sentimental ones included, is the same. Deng's heirs are seeking legitimacy in his mantle and pushing ahead with more pragmatic economic reforms.

People's Daily ticked off the new leadership's successes in the post-

Deng year: the smooth recovery of Hong Kong, President Jiang Zemin's red-carpet welcome at the U.S. House, a landmark party congress that launched an ambitious program to revitalize state industries.

By bringing capitalist reform to state enterprises, relics of an era of central planning that employ two-thirds of the urban workforce, Jiang and his colleagues are taking risks Deng contemplated but never dared.

Unemployment, already as high as 15 million in the cities, could rise in the next two years, a once unthinkable event in a society that promised lifetime jobs. At the same time, 130 million peasants, freed from land-bound toil by Deng's move to collective farming, are looking for work, many of them in the cities.

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