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Remarks by H.E. Kofi Annan on arrival in Kenya - 4th October 2009

I am very pleased to be back in Kenya after almost a year.

The purpose of my trip is to get a better understanding of how the National Dialogue agreements are being implemented some 18 months after the formation of the Coalition Government.

I have been following events in Kenya very closely, and clearly, the Kenyan people are expecting more from the Coalition Government – more unity of purpose, more progress on the reform agenda, more concrete action to end impunity and combat corruption.

Those sentiments are understandable, and I will be urging the Coalition Government to listen to the voices of the people and do more to push forward the essential reforms.

Far-reaching reforms such as the ones agreed on during the National Dialogue negotiations last year will necessarily take some time, and a lot of hard work, not only on the part of the Government but on the part of all Kenyans.

And yet, with a sense of urgency and national spirit, it can be done and done in a reasonable time.

Achieving reforms will also depend on the strong commitment and political will of the coalition parties and parliamentarians.

In Kenya today, there is added pressure to complete the reforms – including a new Constitution, electoral reforms, police and judicial reforms, as well as land reform – well before the 2012 elections, so as to prevent a recurrence of the crisis and violence experienced after the 2007 elections.

The challenge is to achieve these reforms before the country enters the next electoral cycle in about one year or 18 months from now.

That is what I will be discussing here, starting with the two principals, President Kibaki and Prime Minister Odinga, and other political leaders, but also with representatives of civil society, religious leaders, the private sector and others.

Thank you.