

## **Annan slams Africa's 'sit-tight leaders'**

July 23 2007 at 09:16AM

---

Johannesburg - Former United Nations secretary general Kofi Annan on Sunday slammed Africa's brutal regimes, sit-tight leaders and conflicts in the midst of chronic poverty and disease.

"About half of the world's armed conflicts and some three quarters of the UN's peacekeepers are in Africa. This is because millions of Africans are still at the mercy of brutal regimes... showing no respect for human rights, or even human life," he said in a speech in South Africa for Nelson Mandela's birthday.

Annan said the former South African president showed a "wonderful" example when he quit office in 1999 at the end of his first term. Mandela turned 89 on Wednesday.

"What a wonderful example on a continent where presidents have, in some cases, defied or changed their countries' constitution and clung to power for decades," he said.

Violent conflicts continue to rage in many spots on the continent, including northern Uganda and Darfur, he said.

He warned Africans against a form of racism that unites citizens to rise up and expel tyrannical white rulers "but excuse tyrannical rulers who are black".

In a speech constantly interrupted by loud standing ovations, he urged African leaders to respect the rule of law, protect rights and property, fight corruption and promote good governance.

Africans should work together to fight against conflict, hunger, poverty, disease, water shortages and environmental degradation, he said.

"If some of us are poor, we are all the poorer. If some countries are unstable, we are less secure," he said.

Africa, he said, should work together towards a comprehensive strategy that rests on three pillars: peace and security, development, human rights and the rule of law.

"We all share responsibility for each other's security," he said, citing the regime of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe.

The "ever downward spiral in Zimbabwe is both intolerable and unsustainable. We all have a stake in resolving the crisis", Annan said.

He said that although stability may be spreading in Africa, the dream of a continent at peace "remains a distant goal".

Annan condemned the G8 group of developed nations for not keeping promises to Africa.

The G8 resolve to increase aid to Africa by \$25-billion a year by 2010 was "encouraging" but he said the group's "track record (in keeping promises), to be frank, is not very good".

Mandela, who was led into the auditorium by Annan, described the former UN boss as "a great son of our continent".

