

World leaders spotlight growing rich-poor gap

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — As world leaders gathered Monday for the annual U.N. General Assembly, French President Jacques Chirac — already deeply at odds with the Bush administration over the war in Iraq — accused Washington of obstructing a worldwide campaign to eradicate poverty.

Chirac spoke after the U.S. administration declined after two high-level meetings to endorse a final declaration that was supported by 110 countries. The nonbinding document called for a “renewed political mobilization” to help more than 1 billion people trying to eke out a living on less than \$1 a day.

“However strong the Americans may be, in the long term, you cannot successfully oppose a position taken by 110 countries,” Chirac told a news conference. “You can’t oppose that forever.”

Chirac planned to return to Paris Monday night, making it impossible for him to meet with President Bush who speaks before the General Assembly when it officially opens Tuesday. Bush did not attend the Monday meetings.

Chirac said he and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva would propose new approaches to fund the alleviation of poverty, although the preparatory meetings resulted in no specific proposals.

“The price of selfishness is rebellion,” he warned. “We should ensure that the world’s unprecedented wealth becomes a vehicle for the integration, rather than exclusion, of the most underprivileged.

“It is up to us to give globalization a conscience,” he said.

Bush has said his speech will emphasize international humanitarian concerns as the world body begins two weeks of meetings in the midst of an upsurge of violence in Iraq and a massive humanitarian crisis in western Sudan.

The document adopted after Monday’s meetings, but not signed by the Americans did not make specific anti-poverty proposals but said the time had come “to give further attention to innovative mechanisms of financing — public and private, compulsory and voluntary, of universal or limited membership” to raise funds to fight poverty.

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman rejected the idea of a global tax proposed in a February U.N. report and favored by some of the participants, including France, saying it was impossible to impose.

“A global tax is inherently undemocratic,” she said.

Silva said overwhelming hunger and unemployment in developing nations was contributing to international violence.

“How many more times will it be necessary to repeat that the most destructive weapon of mass destruction in the world is poverty?” he asked during a speech at a session that focused on a U.N. report about the growing divided between the world’s haves and have-nots.

Asked later whether he was concerned by the lack of U.S. support for the declaration, Silva told journalists that

the United States had taken an important step by sending a representative.

The report said the income gap between the richest and poorest countries has widened over the past four decades and the vast majority of the world’s population could fail to see the benefits of globalization.

“Fair globalization must begin with the right of everyone to a job,” Silva said, stressing that “dignified work, like the fight against hunger, cannot wait.”

Bush, who has focused on Iraq in his last two speeches to the General Assembly, is making a dramatic shift this year. He said in his radio broadcast Saturday he would “talk about the great possibilities of our time to improve health, expand prosperity and extend freedom in the world.”

Monday’s meetings were aimed at setting the stage for a General Assembly summit next year to assess progress toward meeting the goals of the 2000 Millennium Summit. Those goals include halving the number of people living in dire poverty from 2000 levels, ensuring that all children have an elementary school education, that all families have clean water and that the AIDS epidemic is halted — all by 2015.

“Progress in eradicating extreme poverty has been uneven,” U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan said. “With creativity and political will, we could do much better.”

The World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, which was es-

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Annan chides terrorism, wants violators caught

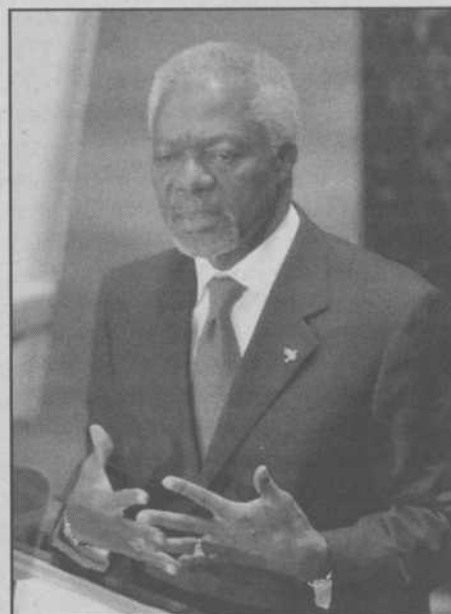
UNITED NATIONS (AP) - With terrorist acts on the rise, U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan warned world leaders Tuesday that basic laws to protect civilians are being “shamelessly disregarded” around the globe.

In a somber speech before presidents, prime ministers and ministers from 191 nations, Annan said the prevalence of massacres, hostage-takings, attacks against children and cold-blooded murders puts us to shame and reflects “our collective failure to uphold the rule of law.”

To restore respect for laws that protect the poor and keep the strong from oppressing the weak, “We must start from the principle that no one is above the law, and no one should be denied its protection,” Annan said. “Every nation that proclaims the rule of law at home must respect it abroad, and every nation that insists on it abroad must enforce it at home.”

Last week, the secretary-general reiterated that the U.S.-led war in Iraq violated the U.N. Charter and for the first time called it “illegal.” In his list of violations of the rule of law on Tuesday, he cited “Iraqi prisoners flagrantly abused,” an implicit criticism of the U.S. treatment of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison near Baghdad.

President Bush, in his speech to the world body, defended his decision to invade Iraq and urged support for the country’s interim government, whose prime



UN Secretary General Kofi Annan addresses the United Nations General Assembly at the United Nations headquarters in New York on Tuesday.

minister, Ayad Allawi, was among the VIPs in attendance. He linked the chaos and violence in Iraq to the more politically popular war on terrorism, saying terrorists believe “suicide and murder are justified.”

Broadening the U.S. agenda from Iraq — which dominated his U.N. speeches the past two years — Bush also appealed for greater efforts to fight terrorism, to end the

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Mentoring

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came from Melvin Ennis and Lawrence Weekly. “The original purpose of the program was to provide leadership training for our young men, but after inquiries from others as to what are we doing for our young women, we incorporated the program to include both,” Washington said.

Ennis serves as president of the organization. “One of the focuses of the program centers around developing our young people’s computer skills,” Ennis said. “Many of them are deficient in computer literacy and they don’t do well on proficiency tests, especially in math. Another thing that we offer in the program is the opportunity for the students to give back to the community through a community service project.

“Last year, we cleaned up Jackson Street and Fitzgerald Park,” Ennis said. “We have taken the students out camping and fishing and have taught them how to be responsible

handling firearms with the understanding of the consequences of their actions in dealing with firearms and seeing how destructive firearms can be when discharged inappropriately.”

One of the long-term goals of the organization is to establish a charter school that will enable them to work with more young men and women, fostering academic achievement and social development, Washington and Ennis said. The importance of the students developing their life skills and learning to relate to one another with dignity and respect continues to be a focus of the program as it grows and reaches out to the community.

Many other individuals have served as mentors and role models for the students in the program and have contributed endlessly to ensuring the success of the program.

For further information regarding Camp Brotherhood/Camp Sisterhood, contact Ennis at (702) 455-7007.

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