



PRESS RELEASE

DR. CLOS: “Ms. Kirabo brings to UN-HABITAT the experience of someone who knows the daily urban challenges that citizens and governments are facing”

Nairobi, Kenya – 11 October 2011 – United Nations Under-Secretary General and UN-HABITAT Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos, expressed his satisfaction with the appointment of the new UN-HABITAT Deputy Executive Director, Ms. Aisa Kirabo Kacyira.

Earlier today, the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the appointment of Ms. Kirabo from the Republic of Rwanda as the Deputy Executive Director and Assistant Secretary-General for UN-HABITAT. Previously holding this position was Ms. Inga Björk-Klevby of Sweden.

The UN-HABITAT Executive Director has stressed that “Ms. Kirabo brings to UN-HABITAT the experience of someone who knows daily urban challenges that citizens and governments are facing. She has been a Mayor of one of the fastest urbanizing cities in the world, Kigali, and she is currently Governor of Rwanda Eastern Province”.

Dr. Clos reiterates that “we should be able to build a political commitment to accommodate rapid increases in urban populations, to prevent the emergence of slums, to face climate change and to fight against urban poverty and inequality. I am sure that Ms. Kirabo will be a big support in rethinking the urban agenda and in adopting a new approach to the challenges of urbanization”.

In her new role, Ms. Kirabo will assist the Executive Director, Dr. Joan Clos, in the overall management of UN-HABITAT to achieve its mandate and will support the new UN-HABITAT agenda to face the urban challenges by strengthening urban policies to generate more equitable, wealthy and sustainable cities. Among her many important responsibilities, Ms. Kirabo will support Dr. Clos in advancing the key reviews currently underway at UN-HABITAT, including the review of UN-Habitat’s strategic priorities for the coming years leading to Habitat III in 2016.

Ms. Kirabo brings to this position a broad knowledge and experience of over 15 years in senior management and strategic leadership in Government and Non-Government institutions; both national and international. Since February 2011, Ms. Kirabo has served as Governor of Eastern Province, the largest province with a population of 2.5 million. Ms. Kirabo has overseen the development and urbanisation of Kigali City’s bordering province in a sustainable manner. She has facilitated strategic planning in line with government policy, while over-seeing effective and efficient use of resources, capacity building and service delivery. Her skills at fostering regional diplomatic and cross-border trade relations will be essential as UN-Habitat’s new urban agenda is embraced by its partners.

Ms. Kirabo’s leadership as the Mayor of Kigali City (2006 - 2011), one of the fastest urbanizing cities in the world is well noted. In recognition of the high level of cleanliness, greenness, safety and the sustainable, affordable housing initiatives combined with pro-poor urban employment opportunities, under Ms. Kirabo’s leadership, Kigali won the UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honour Award in 2008. As UN-Habitat undergoes an organizational review, Ms. Kirabo’s experience in enhancing Kigali’s competitiveness amidst the major global challenges such as the financial crisis, climate change and others, will be beneficial to the organization.

Prior to her position as Mayor, Ms. Kirabo was an Elected Member of Parliament (and member of Parliamentary Standing Committee in charge of land use and management, settlement and environment), she actively participated in the legislative and over-sight functions of parliament in addition to community mobilization.

Ms. Kirabo was educated at James Cook University, Australia where she gained her Masters in Veterinary Science in Animal Production and Economics and at Makerere University, Uganda where she gained her Bachelor of Veterinary Medicine. She is currently pursuing an MBA in the School of Finance and Banking, Rwanda/Maastricht School of Management, Netherlands.

Ms. Kirabo is 46 years old, married and has four children.

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