

Opening Keynote Address

Dr. Anna K. TIBAIJUKA, Executive Director, UN-HABITAT



CURRICULUM VITAE

Dr. Anna Kajumulo TIBAIJUKA (D.Sc., Agro-Economics)
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Director-General, United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON)

Anna Tibaijuka is the first African woman elected by the UN General Assembly as Under-Secretary-General of a United Nations programme. She is currently serving a second, four-year term as Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-HABITAT. A Tanzanian national born to smallholder banana-coffee farmers in Muleba, Tanzania, she was educated at the Swedish University of Agricultural Science in Uppsala. In October 2006, she was appointed Director-General of the United Nations Offices in Nairobi (UNON), the only UN headquarters in Africa and the developing world. She has served as a Member of the Commission for Africa established by British Prime Minister Tony Blair which resulted in the cancellation of multilateral debt for several African countries by the G8 Summit in 2005 at Glen Eagles, Scotland. In July 2005 the Secretary General appointed Mrs. Tibaijuka as his Special Envoy on Human Settlements Issues in Zimbabwe following massive evictions of the poor in urban areas. She is currently a member of the World Health Organization Commission on the Social Determinants of Health, and is also a member of the Advisory Board of the Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor, co-chaired by the former US Secretary of State, Ms. Madeleine Albright, and the Chilean economist Hernando de Soto.

Since 2002, Mrs. Tibaijuka has been instrumental in promoting water, sanitation and slum upgrading globally and in assisting the African Union to establish the African Ministerial Conference on Housing and Urban Development (AMCHUD). She also helped place urban poverty high on the agenda of similar regional bodies for Latin American and the Caribbean, as well as the Asia-Pacific. In its unanimous decision to re-elect Mrs. Tibaijuka for a second term as Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, the General Assembly noted her success in forging strategic partnerships with financial institutions for follow-up investment in housing and urban infrastructure. These include the UN-HABITAT \$570 million agreement with the African Development Bank and \$500 million agreement with the Asian Development Bank.

Mrs. Tibaijuka joined the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UNCTAD, in Geneva, in 1998 as Director and Special Coordinator for the Least Developed, Land-locked and Island Developing Countries. She was in charge of capacity building in their trade negotiations in the World Trade Organization, and assisted LDCs, for the first time ever, to forge a coherent and united negotiating position for their special trade interests. In July 2000 she was appointed by Secretary General, Kofi Annan as Assistant-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the former United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), the UN agency for the built-up environment and urban development headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. She is credited with raising awareness about the global challenge of chaotic urbanization, inspiring a new strategic vision, and significantly enhancing the organization's performance, management and image. These efforts restored donor confidence and the overall credibility of the organization, resulting in its upgrading into a full-fledged United Nations Programme on Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT) by the General Assembly in December, 2001. She was in turn elected in December 2002 by the General Assembly as the first Executive Director of the new UN-HABITAT programme at the level of Under Secretary General.

Prior to joining the UN, Mrs. Tibaijuka pursued an active academic career as a Professor of Economics at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. She is the author of various books and research papers on agriculture and rural development, farming systems, food policy, agricultural marketing and trade, sustainable development, social services delivery, gender and land issues, and environmental economics. She was an active member of the civil society and the women's movement. In 1994 she founded the Tanzanian National Women's Council, BAWATA, an independent non-party affiliated organization fighting for women's economic and social rights. In 1996 she founded Barbro Johansson Girls' Education Trust (Joha Trust) that advocates for quality girls' education in Tanzania and Africa and operates a model secondary school for poor girls, mostly orphans. She is patron of Tanzania Young Entrepreneurs Initiative. She is a member of various professional associations and is a veteran of UN world summits, including the Beijing Women's Conference, the Copenhagen Social Summit, Habitat II at Istanbul, and the Food Summit in Rome. She is winner of several awards including honorary Doctorate degrees conferred by the University of McGill in Canada, University College London, and Herriot Watt in Scotland. She is a Foreign Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Agriculture and Forestry and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture. She is a widow with 5 children, one of whom is adopted.

CONTACTS

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