

UN HABITAT
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME
Programme des Nations Unies pour les établissements humains
Programa de las Naciones Unidas para los Asentamientos Humanos
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

10 August 2010

Dear Mr. Secretary-General:

As my tenure at UN-HABITAT comes to a close, I am writing to you with a deep sense of urgency and frustration to express my concern and distress about the continuing delay to appoint my successor in good time so that I could have undertaken an orderly handover with suitable briefing. My term ends, as you know, on 31 August 2010 and even if a decision is taken today, it will be almost impossible for this to be done. I signaled to you in plenty of time (initially at UN-HABITAT's Governing Council on 3 April 2009 as confirmed in my letter to your Chef de Cabinet of 15 September 2009 – see attached) that I would not be requesting an extension at UN-HABITAT but for another position in the UN system in line with your own policy of rotation. Therefore there has been considerable time to plan for a handover, and this is the time I had hoped to do it. However, the reality is the decision about the new ED is yet to be made and only 21 days remain before my tenure ends. I need your guidance on how am to handle this situation for reasons narrated below.

Firstly, the lack of a nominated successor, appointed in good time, has major implications for UN-HABITAT. When I came to the organization in 2000, it was in tatters. Its funding had virtually dried up and staff were existing on short term contracts. As you acknowledged at the last session of the CEB in April where you also announced my departure, my ten year's occupation of the post has provided UN-HABITAT with the stability necessary to considerably strengthen its position and given confidence to member states and donors in delivering its mandate. UN-HABITAT has moved from strength to strength during the period, changing in status to a Programme, gaining membership of the CEB and IASC, growing the World Urban Forum to one of the most prestigious events in the UN calendar, and taking a lead position at the current Shanghai World Expo as managers of the UN Pavilion - amongst many other outstanding achievements. I fear a period without confirmed leadership is likely if not bound to destabilise UN-HABITAT once again given that we have a perilous global financial environment due to the economic difficulties being faced by our donor member states. I am proud to be leaving behind a working reserve of above USD 30 million that I built from scratch. However, donors are unlikely to commit new funding until they are convinced that good leadership is in place. As already happened before, a period of caretaker management will do nothing to create the necessary confidence. It could mean that our financial reserve is run down forcing the agency into another trough in the financial doldrums. This prospect is a major concern for all staff.

Mr. Ban Ki Moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations

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Secondly, it is already difficult to attract and retain staff in Nairobi due to the inherent difficulties facing this duty station. A period without confirmed leadership runs the risk of putting us back to the situation of uncertainty and lack of morale I confronted when I arrived. It is unconscionable for me, having striven so hard for the gains that have been made, to see UN-HABITAT run the risk of being derailed due to an inevitable management and leadership vacuum that could have so easily been avoided through timely action.

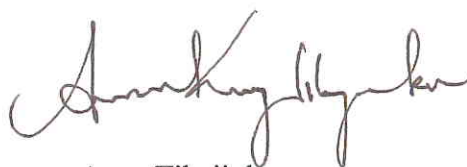
Thirdly, to the best of my knowledge, my views have never been sought about the profile of an appropriate successor or about the suitability of any prospective candidate. While acknowledging your discretion on this matter, I find it surprising and difficult to imagine that there would be a more qualified senior advisor in the UN system than myself in the field of human settlements to offer such advice. I resisted offering unsolicited advice to you and your advisors hoping that the job would be done in time for an orderly handover. Obviously this has not happened, which is why I now feel obliged to point out that I remain at your disposal to assist the process move forward and in the right direction, if that will be of help.

Finally, the legal reality of the agency is that in its upgrading into a Programme the UN GA decided that UN-HABITAT would be led by “.. an Executive Director elected by the General Assembly upon nomination by the Secretary-General in consultation with Member States”. With 21 days remaining, unless radical measures are taken immediately, this condition might not be easily fulfilled, which is clearly a reversal of the gains made in the governance and management of the agency, and contrary to the spirit of UN reforms that you have emphasised.

In light of all of the above, I will appreciate it very much to get written guidance on how I am to proceed with a handover both to avoid contravening GA legislation that requires that I hand over to an elected ED as well as to avoid a leadership and management vacuum on 1 September.

Please accept, dear Mr. Secretary-General, the assurances of my highest consideration

With warm personal regards,



Anna Tibaijuka
Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director

- cc
1. Mr. Vijay Nambiar, Chef de Cabinet, Executive Office of the Secretary-General
 2. Hon. Clifford Emerald Warmington, President of the Governing Council of UN-HABITAT
 3. Ms. Angela Kane, Under-Secretary-General for Management
 4. Ms. Inga Klevby, Deputy Executive Director, UN-HABITAT
 5. Mr. Paul Taylor, Chief, Office of the Executive Director, UN-HABITAT

15 September 2009

Dear Vijay,

Extension of Contract for Deputy Executive Director, Ms Inga Björk-Klevby

My tenure as Executive Director of UN-HABITAT will end in August 2010. I have not received any formal indications concerning incumbency of my post, but I anticipate that the Secretary-General does not have an intention of recommending my renewal. Nonetheless, I await your advice on the next steps concerning my future based on the principle of rotation. As you might be aware, I was originally engaged in the UN as a contracted staff member. I am not aware of ever having lost that standing on my translation to Executive Director and I retain all the entitlements concerning continuity of employment that my default status entails.

Nonetheless, based on the assumption of non-renewal, decisions have to be made concerning the renewal of contract of the Deputy Executive Director, this being a matter that lies within the purview of your office. Ms. Björk-Klevby's contract expires on 31 December 2009. She has made a proposal that her contract should be renewed for 1 year. I support this position as it would facilitate a smooth transition for the new Executive Director and allow him or her sufficient time to identify a suitable replacement.

There is a general preference amongst all stakeholders for an orderly transfer to the new post holders. The decision on renewal should therefore be communicated to Ms. Björk-Klevby as soon as possible. An early indication of your intentions would greatly facilitate this process.

Yours sincerely,



Anna Tibaijuka
Under-Secretary-General and
Executive Director

Mr. Vijay Nambiar,
Chef de Cabinet
Executive Office of the Secretary General

cc Mr. Adnan Issa