



BIOGRAPHY

Mrs. Maimunah Mohd Sharif **Executive Director, UN-Habitat**



Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif of Malaysia is the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). She was appointed by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres in 2017, at the level of Under-Secretary-General. She assumed her post in Nairobi, UN-Habitat headquarters, in 2018. In 2022, her term was extended upon the recommendation of the United Nations General Assembly.

Since joining the United Nations, Ms. Sharif has reformed and re-positioned UN-Habitat as a thought leader in sustainable urbanization. She is a vocal advocate for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda to achieve Sustainable Development Goals and the nationally determined contributions to the Climate Action Paris Agreement. She presided over the Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Session of the World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in 2018; Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates in 2020; and Katowice, Poland in June 2022, respectively. Ms. Sharif is co-Chair of the Secretary-General's Task Force on the Future of Cities and co-Chair of the Local 2030 Coalition, designed to support and accelerate local-led delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals. She is an advocate for local voluntary reviews of the New Urban Agenda. From January to December 2019, Maimunah Mohd Sharif was the Acting Director-General of the United Nations Offices in Nairobi. In May 2019, she headed the first United Nations Habitat Assembly in Nairobi, Kenya.

Prior to this appointment, Ms. Sharif was the Mayor of the City Council of Penang Island, Malaysia. In 2011, she became the first woman to be appointed President of the Municipal Council of Seberang Perai in Malaysia. She is also a member of the International Gender Champions, a leadership network launched in 2015 to promote gender equality.

Ms. Sharif began her career as a town planner at the Municipal Council of Penang Island in 1985. In November 2009, as its General Manager, Ms. Sharif established George Town World Heritage Incorporated and managed the George Town World Heritage Site, which was inscribed by UNESCO in July 2008.

Born in Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, Ms. Sharif holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours in Town Planning Studies from the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology in the UK and a Master of Science in Planning Studies from the Malaysia Science University. She has received several awards. She is married and has two daughters.

Concise Version

Maimunah Mohd Sharif Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Habitat

Maimunah Mohd Sharif (Malaysia) is the Executive Director of UN-Habitat and a champion of sustainable [human settlements](#). She has spearheaded key initiatives aimed at positioning the organization as a leader in sustainable urbanization [and territorial development](#). Her notable accomplishments include the establishment of a new governance structure with universal membership governed by the UN-Habitat Assembly and improvements in the financial performance of the organization. Ms. Sharif co-chairs the Secretary-General's Task Force on the Future of Cities and the Local2030 Coalition. Prior to her appointment at UN-Habitat, Sharif served as Mayor of the City Council of Penang Island, Malaysia. In 2011, she was the first woman to be appointed President of the Municipal Council of Seberang Perai. Maimunah Mohd Sharif holds a BSc with Honours in Town Planning Studies from the University of Wales Institute of Science and Technology in the UK and an MSc in Planning Studies from the Malaysia Science University. [She is married with two daughters.](#)