



“ CHALLENGES OF URBANIZATION IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES ”

A lecture by Dr. Joan Clos
 UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT
 Tuesday, 8 November 2011

PROGRAMME

2.00 pm	Arrival of Guests
2.25 pm	Introductory remarks by the Vice-Chancellor
2.30 – 3.10 pm	The Lecture: Dr. Joan Clos
3.10 – 3.25 pm	Discussions
	Discussant 1: Prof. Paul Syagga, Department of Real Estate and Construction Management, University of Nairobi
	Discussant 2: Mr. Tom Odongo, Director of Planning, City Council of Nairobi
	Discussant 3: Prof. Peter Ngau, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Nairobi
3.25 – 3.55 pm	Q & A from the audience
3.55 – 4.00pm	Vote of thanks by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Affairs)
4.00pm	Guests leave at their pleasure



DR. JOAN CLOS

Appointed Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) at the level of Undersecretary-General by the United Nations General Assembly, Dr. Joan Clos took office at the Programme's headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya on 18 October 2010.

Born in Barcelona on 29 June 1949, he is a medical doctor with a distinguished career in public service and diplomacy. He was twice elected Mayor of Barcelona serving during 9 years 1997-2005. He was then appointed Minister of Industry, Tourism and Trade of Spain (2006-2008). Prior to joining the United Nations, he served as Spanish ambassador to Turkey and Azerbaijan.

He is a medicine graduate from the Universidad Aut3noma de Barcelona (UAB), specialized in Public Health and Epidemiology, at the University of Edinburgh (Scotland). Dr. Clos then joined the Barcelona Municipal Government as Director of Public Health in 1979.

As a city councillor between 1983 and 1987, he earned a reputation for improving municipal management and for urban renewal projects, notably managing the renovation of downtown Barcelona's *Ciutat Vella* district. From 1990 to 1994 he was Deputy Mayor in charge of Finance and Budgeting, playing a key role during the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona.

Joan Clos is also widely credited with inspiring far reaching investment programmes for Barcelona. One of the most ambitious was the *Barcelona@22* programme which gave the city's dilapidated industrial zones a facelift. In 2004 one of these newly refurbished neighbourhoods near the old dockyards was chosen as the site for the second gathering of UN-HABITAT's World Urban Forum, the premier global conference on cities.

At the international level, in 1998 he was elected President of Metropolis, the international network of cities. Two years later, he was elected President of the World Association of Cities and Local Authorities, (WACLAC). Between 2000 and 2007, he served as Chairman of the United Nations Advisory Committee of Local Authorities, (UNACLA). And between 1997 and 2003, he was member of the Council of European Municipalities and Regions, (CEMR).

Dr. Clos received a number of awards which include a gold medal from the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1999 for transforming Barcelona. In 2002, he won the UN-HABITAT Scroll of Honour Award for encouraging global cooperation between local authorities and the United Nations.

**Public Lecture by the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT
(November 2011)**



On Tuesday 8 November 2011 Dr. Joan Clos, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, UN-HABITAT delivered a public lecture at the University of Nairobi. The lecture on "*Challenges of urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa and the role of universities*" was an initiative of the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, University of Nairobi and UN-HABITAT. The function was attended by among others, University of Nairobi staff and students, including invited guests from UN-HABITAT, Kenyatta University, City Council of Nairobi, Mazingira Institute and Institute of French Research in Africa (IFRA). The lecture highlighted and discussed three major issues. These are (1) global trends of population growth and urbanisation; (2) the challenges of urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa; and (3) the role of universities in sustainable urban planning and management.

As much as cities in sub-Saharan Africa experience a number of challenges as a result of high rates of urbanisation, Dr. Clos was particularly concerned with the high proportion of the urban population living in slums, increasing inequalities and urban poverty, as well as the rising youthful population vis-a-viz low economic growth and employment opportunities. Dr. Clos suggested that sustainable urbanisation should be embedded on better planning and design that embraces optimal density, diversity, mobility, equity, efficiency, scale of expected growth and the concept of a vibrant urban economy. Besides their mandates, missions and visions, African universities should be encouraged and facilitated to play a major role in achieving sustainable urbanisation in sub-Saharan Africa. This calls for structured collaboration between

universities and other stakeholders, including UN-HABITAT. The lecture drew stimulating debate from the discussants and audience. The discussants were Prof. Peter Ngau, Prof. David Mungai (University of Nairobi) and Mr. John Barre (Director, Policy Implementation, Nairobi City Council). Dr. Clos punctuated his lecture and discussions with a wide range of experiences from his distinguished career in public service and diplomacy. He has been a city councilor, mayor of Barcelona, a government Minister and an ambassador, among other appointments and positions. Furthermore, he has won several local, national and international recognitions and awards.



Prof. Irandu (right) shares a light moment with Dr. Clos and Prof. Mungai