**Our Executive Director**

**Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Executive Director,**

UN‐Habitat Ms. Maimunah Mohd Sharif (Malaysia) is the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN‐Habitat), appointed at the level of Under‐Secretary‐ General by the Secretary‐General, following an election by the General Assembly on 22 December 2017. She succeeds Dr. Joan Clos of Spain.

Prior to this appointment, Ms. Sharif was the 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. As mayor of a local authority, she led the Municipal Council of Seberang Perai to achieve its vision of a “cleaner, greener, safer and healthier place to work, live, invest and play”. She is a champion of Gender‐Responsive Participatory Budgeting and Gender Responsive Participatory Planning, integrating gender perspectives into the governance process as a means of mainstreaming gender into budgetary and development policy and planning. During her tenure, the Municipal Council of Seberang Perai was the first Local Authority to implement and achieve six quality‐based management ISO certifications.

Ms. Sharif began her career as a Town Planner at the Municipal Council of Penang Island in 1985. In 2003, she was promoted to Director of Planning and Development, a position she held until November 2009. As Director, she was responsible for the preparation of structure and local plans, and was directly involved in development control of Penang City projects and landscape development. She also led a team for the planning and implementation of the Urban Renewal Projects in George Town. In November 2009, she was entrusted as the first General Manager to establish George Town World Heritage Incorporated and manage the George Town World Heritage Site, which was inscribed by UNESCO in July 2008.

Born in Kuala Pilah, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, on 26 August 1961, Ms. Sharif holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours in Town Planning Studies from the University of Wales Institutes of Science and Technology, the United Kingdom, and a Master of Science in Planning Studies from the Malaysia Science University. She has received a number of awards, among others by the Penang State Government and International Organisations, such as “Planner of The Year 2014” by the Malaysian Institute of Planners as well as the 2016 Global Human Settlements Outstanding Contribution Award during Habitat III in Quito, for her contribution in sustainable planning in Seberang Perai. On 11 January 2018, she received a recognition award from the Malaysia Book of Records for being the first Asian woman to be appointed as Executive Director of UN‐Habitat