

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE
UNITED NATIONS *SERGIO VIEIRA DE MELLO* LIBRARY AT NAIROBI
Wednesday, 30 June 2004
United Nations – Gigiri Nairobi**

ADDRESS

BY

**MRS. ANNA KAJUMULO TIBAIJUKA
Under-Secretary-General of the UN
Executive Director, UN-HABITAT**

The Honourable Minister and Distinguished Guests from Brazil who are with us today,
Excellencies,
The Director-General of UNON and Executive Director of UNEP, Dr. Klaus Toepfer and Mrs. Toepfer,
The UNDP Resident Coordinator in Kenya, Mr. Paul Andre de la Porte,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen:

Sergio Vieira de Mello was both a man of learning and a man of action who gave his life in service to humanitarian values and world peace.

Iraq was but the last of many dangerous assignments undertaken by Sergio in the name of the United Nations. He clearly understood the delicate nature of the UN's mission in Iraq, and he told the Security Council in July 2003: "The United Nations presence in Iraq remains vulnerable to any who would seek to target our organisation."

As many of you may know, UN-HABITAT implemented major programmes in Iraq and therefore had the privilege and honour to work closely with Sergio. We benefited greatly from his experience and guidance while he was posted to Baghdad.

The death of Sergio Vieira de Mello robbed the world of a calm voice of reason, humanity and deep intelligence precisely when these qualities are most needed.

In naming the United Nations Library in Nairobi after Sergio Vieira de Mello, we are not only paying tribute to an exemplary and outstanding colleague, but we are honouring an intellectual spirit that sought reasoned solutions to humanity's most intractable problems.

I can think of no better way in which to express our gratitude to this son of Brazil than by dedicating the United Nations Library in Nairobi to his memory.

Libraries are the highest expression of our humanity, allowing us to build our future upon the achievements and accumulated knowledge of those who have inhabited this planet before us.

For a global organization like UN-HABITAT, libraries everywhere play a vital role. In our field, the library is central to the process of research and learning, helping all who are engaged in sustainable urban development and shelter keep abreast of the latest ideas and information.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Sergio Vieira de Mello and I were both appointed to our posts by the General Assembly at the same time in 2002 – he as High Commissioner for Human Rights and I as Under-Secretary-General. Upon assumption of my duties here in Nairobi, one of my first decisions was to revive the library function at UN-HABITAT.

The opportunity to provide common library services with other Nairobi-based agencies, particularly UNEP, headed by my good friend and colleague, Klaus Toepfer, was most welcome. This library will allow us to provide quality and cost effective services to our staff members as well as to share our knowledge bases with each other and with the wider community of African researchers.

This library is a fitting tribute to Sergio Vieira de Mello, a man who was deeply committed to bringing peace to all regions the world. Given his work as the United Nations Regional Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes Region of Africa, and in Mozambique, I feel that he would be particularly pleased that this library will benefit Africans. More than most, he realized how important it is to develop the people of the continent in order to ensure a peaceful future. In today's world, I feel sure that the physical location of the library will not limit the service that can be provided. This library will greatly benefit the East African region and beyond.

In dedicating this United Nations Library – the Sergio Vieira de Mello Library – may each of us sustain the memory of Sergio Vieira de Mello and share his commitment to human rights and the betterment of this world.