

Natalia Kanem Named Acting UNFPA Executive Director

UNITED NATIONS, New York, 5 June 2017—Following the untimely death of UNFPA Executive Director, Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin, the United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, has named Dr. Natalia Kanem as Acting Executive Director of UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund.

Dr. Kanem assumes her new duties today, after having been serving as UNFPA Deputy Executive Director (Programme) since July 2016.

Dr. Kanem brings to the position more than 25 years of strategic leadership experience in medicine, public and reproductive health, social justice and philanthropy. She started her career in academia with the Johns Hopkins and Columbia University schools of medicine and public health. While serving as a Ford Foundation officer from 1992 to 2005, she helped pioneer work in women's reproductive health and sexuality,

in particular through her position as the Foundation's representative for West Africa. She then served at the Foundation's headquarters, becoming Deputy Vice-President for its worldwide peace and social justice programmes in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and North America. Dr. Kanem was founding president of ELMA Philanthropies Inc., a private institution focusing primarily on children and youth in Africa. She served there from the institution's inception until 2011. From 2012 to 2013, she was a senior associate of the Lloyd Best Institute of the West Indies, which is dedicated to development in the Caribbean.

Since 2014, Dr. Kanem had been serving as UNFPA Representative in Tanzania. Dr. Kanem holds a medical degree from Columbia University, New York, and a Master's degree in Public Health, with specializations in Epidemiology and Preventive Medicine, from the University of Washington, Seattle. She is also a magna cum laude graduate of Harvard University, where she studied History and Science.