

**Photography Exhibition “Kenya through the diplomat’s lens”**

**Thursday, 16 January 2020, UNON, Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya**

**Excellency Burhan Namik Salim Al-Jaf, Ambassador of Iraq to Kenya**

**Madam Director-General of UNON, Zainab Bangura**

**Madam Executive Director of UNEP, Inger Anderson**

**Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps**

**Excellencies**

**Friends**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

**A very good day to all of you! Siku njema kwenu nyote!**

**I am extremely honoured to be speaking here at the opening of this most impressive exhibition of photographs, which is titled “Kenya Through the Diplomat’s Lens 2019”.**

**There are some wonderful photographs here that show the real diversity of Kenya and its amazing culture. We feel so privileged to live here in Kenya and I think we appreciate it even more after looking at these beautiful images.**

**I am also extremely impressed by the skill of the photographers. We need to remind ourselves that they are not full-time photographers, but individuals with extremely important and hectic jobs. I am impressed they have found the time to have a hobby and to carry it out so professionally. I know that diplomats travel a great deal and meet a wide range of people, so they are best placed to**

**showcase this country's culture and heritage.**

**As you know UN-Habitat is moving towards a big event, the tenth session of the World Urban Forum that will take place between 8-13 February in Abu Dhabi, and the theme for this WUF is "Cities for opportunities: connection Culture and Innovation". As UN-Habitat, we believe urban development should be based on reality on the ground including culture and heritage in order to preserve the unique characteristics of our human settlements.**

**During the WUF, a high-level discussion will be organized with traditional authorities among other stakeholders to discuss their roles in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. I trust that such event will give us new idea on how to strengthen our collaboration with the Government of Kenya to streamline this richness of the culture in Kenya into UN-habitat programs and engagement in the country.**

**I would like to congratulate all the diplomats who contributed towards this exhibition as well as the organizers and sponsors.**

**I am sure that you need no encouragement to purchase one or more of these amazing pictures to hang on your walls at home, and it is heartwarming to hear that all proceeds will go to very worthwhile charities.**

**Thank you very much. asante sana.**