Biographies: Panel – GAR SR 2023 Launch

Chair:

Mami Mizutori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR)

On 31 January 2018, the United Nations Secretary-General announced the appointment of Mami Mizutori of Japan as Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

Ms. Mizutori succeeds Robert Glasser of Australia to whom the Secretary-General is grateful for his dedication and excellent leadership of UNISDR.

Ms. Mizutori brings to the position a combination of management and leadership expertise as well as more than 25 years of experience in international affairs and security. She is currently Executive Director of the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures, University of East Anglia, United Kingdom, since 2011. Prior to joining the Institute, she served for 27 years in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in various capacities, including as Budget Director, Director of the Japan Information and Culture Centre at the Embassy of Japan in London, Director of the National Security Policy Division, Director of the United Nations Policy Division, Director of the Status of United States Forces Agreement Division and Deputy Director of the Personnel Division. She has worked in London, Washington, D.C., and Mexico City. She has taught courses on governance in East Asia at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University and international studies at Waseda University, Tokyo.

Moderator:

Ronald Jackson, Head, United Nation’s Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery for Building Resilience Team, UNDP

As of 1st May 2020, Mr. Ronald Jackson has been appointed to head the DRR and Recovery for Building Resilience Team of UNDP in Geneva. Previously he was the Executive Director of the Caribbean Disaster Management Agency (CDEMA). Before his appointment, he was the Director General of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management (ODPEM) in Jamaica, a position he held since August 2006 until March 2013. He previously served ODPEM as Deputy Director General, Senior Director of the Preparedness and Operations Division and as Regional Coordinator for the Southern parishes. He has been extensively involved in disaster management at the national, regional and international level in various capacities. At the national level, he lent his
expertise to the coordination of the national response to the impact of Hurricanes Charlie, Ivan (2004); Dennis and Emily (2005); Tropical Depression 16 and subsequently Tropical Storm Nicole (2010) and most recently Hurricane Sandy (2012).

Panelists:

1. Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General, Executive Office of the Secretary-General (EOSG)

Amina J. Mohammed is the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

Prior to her appointment, Ms. Mohammed served as Minister of Environment of the Federal Republic of Nigeria where she steered the country’s efforts on climate action and efforts to protect the natural environment.

Ms. Mohammed first joined the United Nations in 2012 as Special Adviser to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon with the responsibility for post-2015 development planning. She led the process that resulted in global agreement around the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the creation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Ms. Mohammed began her career working on the design of schools and clinics in Nigeria. She served as an advocate focused on increasing access to education and other social services, before moving into the public sector, where she rose to the position of adviser to four successive Presidents on poverty, public sector reform, and sustainable development.

2. 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. On 22 January 2018, Ms. Sharif assumed her post at UN-Habitat’s Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. 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 became the first woman to be appointed President of the Municipal Council of Seberang Perai. As mayor, 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 Planning, integrating gender perspectives into the governance process. During her tenure, the Municipal Council of Seberang Perai was the first Local Authority to implement and achieve six quality-based management ISO certifications.

3. **Beth Bechdol, Deputy Director-General at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

Beth Bechdol is Deputy Director-General at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

Before joining FAO, Ms Bechdol was President and CEO of AgriNovus Indiana, the Midwestern state’s economic development initiative focused on advancing the agbioscience sector and developing 21st century talent. Prior to her leadership of AgriNovus, Ms Bechdol was Director of agribusiness strategies at Indianapolis-based law firm Ice Miller LLP where she helped build the firm’s dedicated legal practice to food and agribusiness clients. She also was the former Deputy Director of the Indiana State Department of Agriculture.
4. Leonardo Souza, Chief, Energy Statistics Section, UN Statistics Division

Leonardo Rocha Souza is the Chief of the Energy Statistics Section, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). Before he started working in UNSD, he spent one year working as an economic advisor in the Brazilian Ministry of Planning, he acted as a professor in the Department of Mathematics of the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, and participated in many consultancy projects in Brazil, mainly in the energy sector.

Leonardo has published articles in scientific journals and holds a PhD in Electrical Engineering from the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro.

5. Kerry Hinds, Director, Department of Emergency Management

Miss Hinds assumed the role of Director on May 1st, 2015. In this role, she is responsible for the daily operations at the Department of Emergency Management in Barbados and the coordination of the National Emergency Management Programme. Previously she was the Deputy Director at the Department of Emergency Management from 2007 to 2015, and Programme Officer from 2001-2007. She has represented the department and the Government of Barbados at several disaster management conferences and meetings as well as held positions on a number of disaster risk management working group committees both locally and internationally. Ms. Hinds has also worked as a Business Continuity Consultant for the World Bank Group.

Jenty Kirsch-Wood joined UNDRR in 2021 as the Head of Global Risk Analysis and Reporting. Previously she served as UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Kyrgyzstan and advised Viet Nam and Nepal on climate change and disaster resilience issues.

She also served as the Disaster and Climate Change Policy Focal Point for UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. She has over 20 years’ experience working with UN agencies and non-governmental organizations in Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kenya and Somalia.