



IN LOVING MEMORY OF
MS. AISA KIRABO KACYIRA
ASG AND HEAD OF UNSOS

1 Sep
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UN honours legacy of the late ASG Aisa Kacyira

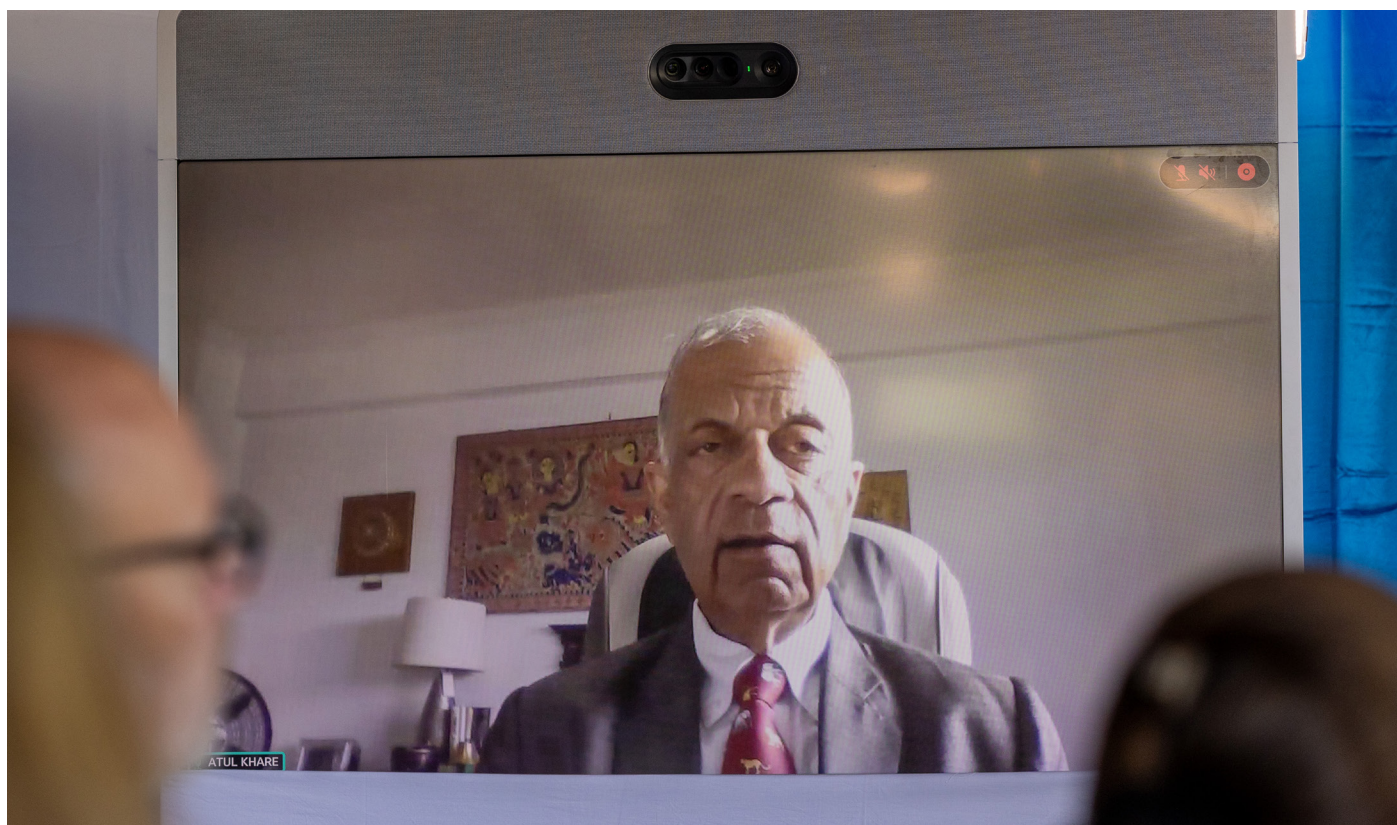
Mogadishu - The United Nations in Somalia held a memorial service in Mogadishu to honour Assistant Secretary-General Aisa Kirabo Kacyira's life, legacy and contribution to peace and security in Somalia.



UN personnel and senior officials from the Federal Government of Somalia, African Union Support and Stabilisation Mission in Somalia (AUSSOM), and diplomats accredited to Somalia reflected on the legacy of the departed Head of the United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS) and her impact.



Speakers at the ceremony included UN Under-Secretary-General in the Department of Operational Support Atul Khare – who attended virtually from the UN Headquarters in New York, Somalia’s deputy Prime Minister, Salah Ahmed Jama, the SRCC and Head of AUSSOM, Ambassador El Hadji Ibrahima Diene, UN Special Representative for Somalia, James Swan, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, George Conway and UNSOS Director Ms. Qurat ul-Ain Sadozai.



Under-Secretary-General Khare noted UNSOS’ significant progress in strengthening support to the Somali Security Forces, the African Union peace support operations, and the UN field missions in Somalia under ASG Kacyira’s leadership.

“The best way to honour her is to continue the work she championed, to remain committed to the mission, to strive for operational excellence, to support one another and to carry her vision forward with the same integrity and courage,” said USG Khare.

ASG Kacyira, who died on 12 August 2025, was saluted for steering UNSOS in providing critical logistical support such as rations, transport, fuel, water, and other services to enable successful operations by African Union troops and the Somali Security Forces.



In his tribute, Swan said, “More than a colleague to us, she was also a friend, mentor, sister, and mother to so many. In Mogadishu, she was affectionately called Mama UNSOS, reflecting the care and encouragement she gave to colleagues and friends in Somalia.”



Sadozai described ASG Kacyira as “a mentor and a source of strength and inspiration”, who always listened, offered guidance and believed in nurturing potential in others.

“Her vision for a peaceful Somalia was not an abstract idea. It was a daily practice, reflected in her work and interactions. To me, personally, she was not a boss, but a mentor, a mother figure and a source of support,” said Sadozai.



Ambassador Diene, who represented the African Union, saluted ASG Kacyira for guiding the transition process under which AU troops handed over security responsibilities to the Somali Security Forces.

"We remain eternally grateful for the sheer scale of the positive impact she made to advance the execution of our mandate. The progress we see in our transition process today strongly bears the indelible imprint of her work. It is her legacy," said Ambassador Diene.



The United States Ambassador to Somalia, Richard Riley, who spoke on behalf of the diplomatic corps, described ASG Kacyira as a humanitarian who deeply cared about people in her lifetime.

"Ambassador Aisa was a mayor, she was a governor, she was a Member of Parliament, and she served in so many humanitarian organisations at very senior levels. She cared about people, their lives, their security, their safety, their well-being. She truly cared about making this world a better place for everyone," said Ambassador Riley.



Conway, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, highlighted ASG Kacyira's excellent public service record in Rwanda and later her passionate commitment to Somalia's peace-building process as Head of UNSOS.

"She was a strong proponent and advocate of a joined-up and coherent UN system across pillars and across our mandates and having her as a core part of our senior management team indeed made the UN family in Somalia feel much more like a family," noted Conway.



Deputy Prime Minister Jama, who represented the Federal Government, said millions of Somalis, including Somali security forces on the frontlines, had benefitted from ASG Kacyira's good works.

"As a government, we will continue to remember her commitment to human rights, commitment to improving the livelihoods of those in need, and her commitment to the very principles enshrined in the United Nations and her essence for humanity at large," said Deputy Prime Minister Jama.



The hybrid event was also attended by several dignitaries, including Somalia's Deputy Minister of Defence Idris Osman Haji Ali, Somalia's Defence Forces Chief Major General Odowa Yusuf Rage, diplomats from the United States, Turkey, the European Union, Kenya, United Nations staff in Somalia and Nairobi, as well as ASG Kacyira's family members.



ASG Kacyira's daughter Kakazi, who spoke behalf of the family in Rwanda, thanked UN staff for standing with the family during the time of grief and for honouring their mother, urging them to carry on the legacy for a peaceful and secure Somalia.

"Her hope for Somalia was one that she had for her country a few decades ago and one that she continued to have for her children. It was a hope for active peace and for unwavering excellence for both the country and its children. And I think we all ought to do what we can in our little capacities to carry that legacy forth," said Kakazi.



Representatives of UN staff in Somalia, Nairobi, and various pillar heads of UNSOS also eulogised the ASG Kacyira.



The event was marked with the laying of wreaths and inaugurating the Kacyira conference room in her honour as a lasting tribute to her outstanding service and leadership.

