



Biography of the Distinguished First Lady Denise Nyakeru Tshisekedi



Born on the 9th of March, 1967 in Bukavu in South Kivu, Denise NYAKERU TSHISEKEDI has been married for twenty-three years to the fifth President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Félix - Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo. She is the happy mother of five children including a boy and four girls.

Orphan of father and mother, nine months after her birth, she with her brothers and sisters were taken care of by her maternal uncle, named Father Sylvestre Ngami Mudahwa, a Catholic chaplain of the Zairian Armed Forces, who adopted and raised them in Kinshasa.

In 1985, the benefactor uncle died in a traffic accident. This tragic episode, far from weakening her, made her stronger and strengthened her hope in life. She obtained her state diploma and continued her studies in Belgium, where she then began a career as a caregiver.

A profession marked by altruism, respect, solidarity, and generosity, values which built her, which define her and which will govern the choices of her future social commitments.

Since her husband's became President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the one now called "the Distinguished First Lady", has invested in the promotion of Congolese women and girls, through her foundation "Denise Nyakeru Tshisekedi Foundation (DNTF)".

The DNTF, created in May 2019, focuses its attention on 4 crucial axes in order to achieve the above-mentioned ultimate objective. First, it is the health of women, the foundation of any effective policy. Second, the education of the girl, especially those from disadvantaged and vulnerable areas. Third, the fight against all forms of violence which destroy the image of women and girls, both for themselves and for society, and thus tend to devalue it. And finally, the financial empowerment of the Congolese woman who is the last link in the chain, because only a healthy woman, well educated and far from any form of violence, can claim to contribute to the development of her nation.

Appointed Goodwill Ambassador of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) in May 2019, for the fight against gender-based violence and the empowerment of women, she was also designated "World Champion in the Prevention of Violence Sexuality related to conflicts" by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations in charge of this issue, in December 2019. This title, far from being a reward, is a mission: to carry the voice of the victims of this scourge at the highest level of national, regional and global institutions with the United Nations.