

Concept Note for Participants at the

## **Discussion on consolidating and strengthening the selection process of the UN Secretary-General**

**23 May 2018, Estonian House**

### **1. Consolidating the process**

Participants will discuss strategies and timelines to effectively consolidate the gains achieved for a more open, transparent and inclusive selection process in selecting next Secretary-Generals.

*Over 2/3rds of Member States (including the NAM and ACT), speaking in this year's general and thematic debate of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly expressed the need to proceed without delay to consolidate the new standards of the SG selection process. The new elements (key role for the GA and its President, clear selection criteria, Joint Letter by the PGA and PSC to start the process, clear timeline, circulation of candidates' names, CVs and mission statements, informal dialogues with Member States and an active role for civil society, regular meetings between the PGA and PSC and reaffirmation of the authority of the GA to draft the appointment resolution) have been addressed in consensus resolutions 69/321 and 70/305 and described in the 13 September 2016 letter from the PGA to the PSC, but have not been adopted as GA policy for future selection processes.*

#### **Discussion points:**

- **What is a sound strategy to ensure the new elements will be consolidated for future selections in a resolution?**
- **What are the most crucial elements to be preserved?**

### **2. Addressing outstanding issues**

Participants will discuss how best to address a range of issues raised by Member States in this year's debates to strengthen the process and address the questions that were left unresolved during the most recent selection.

*These issues include: clarifying the process of nominating and withdrawing candidacies; introducing a deadline for presentation of candidates; improving the open hearings with candidates; discussing the option to appoint the UNSG for a longer, single term as agreed in GA resolution 51/241 of 1997; the SC to propose multiple candidates to the GA; the SC to exercise maximum transparency and*

*promptly publish the outcome of straw polls; and updating the Oath of Office of the Secretary-General. Moreover, many delegates have expressed concern that nationals from certain states continue to be successively appointed to senior positions and that these states hold a monopoly on such positions. This matter, which affects the independence of the UNSG to appoint the most qualified persons to senior posts regardless of nationality, proved to be the most difficult issue in last year's negotiations – including the mere reiteration of existing language accepted in consensus resolutions.*

**Discussion points:**

- **What is the best means to address each of these issues?**
- **Which of them require in-depth discussion?**
- **What is a good time frame to address them?**

**3. Applying the new process to an incumbent UNSG seeking re-appointment**

Participants will discuss how the new process will apply to an incumbent UNSG seeking re-appointment, without having an impact on the UNSG's ability to effectively carry out their duties and with due regard to the equal treatment of all candidates.

*It is important that the principles of the new process equally apply to a re-selection process. The question, however, arises how the process should be adapted to an incumbent UNSG seeking re-selection. Moreover, in the course of the last selection process, several delegates raised ethical issues of fairness and transparency arising about campaign financing of senior UN officials running as candidates and potential conflicts of interests when travelling to attend official UN meetings in the course of campaigning – issues that are also relevant for a re-selection process. There is little precedent on rules to address re-selection in comparable international organizations, but some organizations have adopted a Code of Conduct to address some of the ethical issues involved.*

**Discussion points:**

- **Does application of the new process to an incumbent UNSG seeking re-selection require in depth discussion and if so how?**
- **Should some of the ethical issues be addressed or included in a Code of Conduct?**

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## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

### Lessons Learned

- [ACT lessons learned on the selection and appointment of the ninth UN Secretary-General in 2015/2016 \(A/72/514-S/2017/846\)](#)
- [Summary by the Permanent Representative of Japan, in his personal capacity, of the selection process that highlights key events, with a focus on the role of the Security Council in the process](#)
- [Letter by the President of the 70<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly at the end of his term to the President of the Security Council](#)

### Single longer term

- 1 for 7 Billion [Appointment of the Secretary-General for a longer single term](#)
- 1 for 7 Billion [Papel sobre el "Designación del Secretario-General por un mandato único más extenso"](#)
- 1 for 7 Billion [Papier, "Nomination du Secrétaire général pour un mandat unique de plus longue durée"](#)
- 1 for 7 Billion [Chart comparing country positions on the proposal for the Secretary-General to serve a single term](#) [Ghana has since also expressed support for the proposal]

### End to monopoly on senior appointments

- 1 for 7 Billion [No backroom deals, an end to monopoly: The Secretary-General's ability to make senior UN appointments on merit](#)
- 1 for 7 Billion [Letter to Secretary-General advocating fair, open, inclusive senior appointments, February 2018](#)

### Oath of Office

- [Text oath of office of the UN Secretary-General and Text of Oath of Office of the President of the General Assembly](#) (adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 70/305)

### Codes of Ethics and comparative international appointment procedures

- [Text Code of ethics for the President of the General Assembly](#) (adopted by the General assembly in Annex II of resolution 70/305)
- [Text Code of Conduct for the election of the Director-General of the World Health Organization](#) 1 for 7 Billion [Chart comparing different UN appointment processes](#) for Executive Heads of Select International organizations

### 1 for 7 Billion letters to AHWG in 2018

- [Letter to General Assembly Ad Hoc Working Group, February 2018](#)
- [Letter to General Assembly Ad Hoc Working Group, March 2018](#)
- [Letter to Experts on Revitalization of the GA, 10 April 2018](#)