

UNSGselection.ORG

Campaign for a more democratic *selection process* for the UN Secretary-General

Transparent and Accountable Procedures for the Selection of the UN Secretary-General

In 2006 the Security Council and the General Assembly will appoint the eighth UN Secretary-General. As the UN and other international organizations increasingly improve standards of accountability and impartiality in their hiring practices, it is only logical that the UN initiate a similar process in the selection of its highest official. Historically, [the selection of the UNSG](#), which is carried out by the General Assembly “upon the recommendation of the Security Council,” has occurred largely behind closed doors within minimal parameters, and thus falls far short of [existing international high-level public sector appointment procedures](#) established to ensure qualified appointments.

Based on consultations with NGOs and civil society worldwide, UNSGselection is therefore encouraging the United Nations to incorporate the following procedures to enhance the transparency, accountability and inclusiveness necessary for the selection of a qualified and effective candidate. These procedures reflect crucial yet realistic reforms based on the current UN format, practices within existing international high-level appointment procedures and calls from Security Council members themselves to enhance the accountability of the UN’s management and leadership framework.

Please contact us at info@UNSGselection.org if your organization would like to endorse and publicly support the campaign or if you would like to provide input or feedback.

1. Formal Candidate Qualifications

In accordance with the basic standards of other high-level international public sector appointments, the UN should establish a formal set of candidate qualifications to ensure the selection of an effective and qualified candidate. The purpose of such formal qualifications is to guide member states in assessing the relative competencies of the candidates and to guarantee that the selected candidate adequately fulfills the many roles and functions of the UN Secretary-General.

- a) Comprehensive understanding of and demonstrated commitment to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter, including, but not limited to, international law and multilateralism.
- b) Comprehensive understanding of and demonstrated commitment to the three pillars of UN system: peace and security, development and human rights
- c) Extensive experience with the UN system or other complex international organizations
- d) Diplomatic skills and demonstrated vision and leadership, in accordance with the principles of independence, fairness, and impartiality
- e) Multicultural understanding and gender sensitivity
- f) Strong communication skills and fluency in at least one official UN language
- g) Proven openness to working with civil society and other relevant stakeholders

2. Official Timetable with Systematic Reporting

A set timetable accompanied by systematic reporting, as applied by other international organizations, should be established to provide a more structured, transparent and accountable framework for the selection process.

- a) Formal publicized timetable with deadlines for nominations, shortlists and final selection, as well as an appropriate allotment of time for each phase
- b) Systematic reporting at each phase in the process to be carried out by facilitators appointed by the Security Council

3. Procedures for Assessment of Candidates

Procedures that enhance the transparency of the selection process should be established to facilitate the dissemination of basic information necessary for an adequate assessment of candidates by all relevant parties.

- a) Publication of an official candidate list at the end of the nomination phase, including identification of nominating party for each candidate
- b) Distribution of candidate CVs, and statements from candidates specifying how they fulfill the necessary requirements
- c) Standardized system of background checks
- d) Panel interviews and question/answer sessions with UN member states
- e) Opportunities for relevant stakeholders (NGOs, civil society, media, parliamentarians, private sector, etc) to conduct question/answer sessions with candidates

4. Gender and Geographic Diversity Considerations

Based on the values, principles and priorities of the United Nations, it is important that, in addition to ensuring that candidates meet a number of key qualifications, the selection process be guided by the principles of gender equality and geographic balance.

- a) Gender equality must be considered
- b) The principle of equitable geographic representation must be taken into account.

* Explanatory note: while any or all candidates may not meet the full range of qualifications and diversity considerations, it is important that the process take all factors into account in the selection process