# TOGETHER FIRST

A global system that works for all

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Is a catastrophic?** | **Dependencies?** | **Is organisation?** |
| Yes | Non-Ideal | Yes |
| **Deploy [illegible] technology** | **Facilitate multipolarity** | **Short** |
| **Global catastrophic risks mitigated** | **Risk multipliers managed** | **Implementation timeframe** |

DETAILS

# Reforming the process to select the UN Secretary-General

We achieved historic change in 2016, but we need to consolidate the approaches.

After 70 years of opaque, selection processes dominated by the permanent members of the Security Council, the 2016 appointment represented a dramatic shift towards a much more open, transparent, and inclusive selection process, which has had an impact on the quality of the outcome and, arguably, the standing of the United Nations as a whole.

Prompted by intensive and persistent NGO lobbying, the General Assembly adopted the landmark Resolution 69/321 on September 11, 2015. For the first time, the Assembly agreed on a broad timeline for the selection process, to be initiated by a joint letter of the presidents of the Security Council and the General Assembly; on broad selection criteria; on publishing the names of all candidates; on calling for their CVs and mission statements; and on inviting states to present women as candidates. Crucially, the Assembly decided to have “informal dialogues” with candidates and gave the President of the General Assembly a mandate “to actively support this process.”

The causal link between the reforms proposed by 1 for 7 Billion and implemented for the first time in 2015/16 and the positive effect on the outcome of the recruitment process is clear. For example, several permanent representatives of missions at the United Nations have told 1 for 7 Billion staff that they believed that some (weaker) previous secretaries-general would never have been appointed had this new process been in place.

CONSOLIDATING THE REFORMS

We are glad that the current Secretary-General was been appointed following a much more open and transparent selection process that involved unprecedented open dialogues between all candidates and member states in which civil society participated. It is crucial that the new process is assessed, that advances gained are consolidated and that future steps are identified to further improve the selection process of the Secretary-General, including how the new process applies to an incumbent Secretary-General seeking re-election (in such proposals we do not in any way pronounce upon the performance of the current Secretary-General).

FURTHER REFORMS NECESSARY

Outlined in 1 for 7 Billion's letter to member states 2018 (attached) there are specific further improvements to the process which should be pursued. See below for a list of these including indications of states that have backed these ideas:

• setting a deadline for nominating candidates (for example, by NAM);
• for the Security Council to propose multiple candidates to the General Assembly to choose from ((for example, by NAM);
• the need to clarify the presentation and withdrawal of candidacies and for the Security Council to promptly publish the outcome of straw polls (for example, by Chile)
• appointing the Secretary-General for a longer, single term of office (for example, by South Africa).

There are also a large number of states (including members of the NAM and ACT) who have repeatedly stressed the crucial requirement that the Secretary-General should exercise full independence in making senior appointments on

merit.

The practice of permanent members of the Security Council (P5) extracting promises from candidates for Secretary-General in exchange for support resulting in a de facto monopoly on key senior posts for their own nationals, reduces the number of qualified candidates for senior posts lowers selection standards and must end.

Over 750 organisations have signed up to the campaign with a combined reach of more than 170 million people

We did it before and we can do it again.

• for the Security Council to propose multiple candidates to the General Assembly to choose from ((for example, by NAM);

public voting during the appointment of the Secretary-General.

We would therefore like to see these reforms institutionalised by having them enshrined in further General Assembly

• the need to clarify the presentation and withdrawal of candidacies and for the Security Council to promptly publish resolutions and opportunities such as the political declaration of the UN75 process referring to the positive progress the outcome of straw polls (for example, by Chile)

made. Leadership from the President of the General Assembly could be vital in reinvigorating this issue and focusing

member states' attention on the issue in good time before Antonio Guterres' first term draws to a close.

• appointing the Secretary-General for a longer, single term of office (for example, by South Africa).

In making these proposals we do not in any way pronounce upon the performance of the current Secretary-General.

There are also a large number of states (including members of the NAM and ACT) who have repeatedly stressed the

crucial requirement that the Secretary-General should exercise full independence in making senior appointments on

merit.