TOGETHER FIRST
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ID:	Is anonymous?	Is organisation?
291	No	Yes

Is form complete:	Organisation name:
Yes	1 for 7 Billion

First name:	Last name:
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Global catastrophic risks mitigated	Risk multipliers managed	Implementation timeframe
Climate change	**Conflict or political violence**	**Short**
Eco-system collapse	**Institutions that lack inclusivity or accountability**	
Pandemics and anti-microbial resistance	**Poverty and inequality**	
Weapons of Mass Destruction		
The threat from new and emerging technology		
Unknown risks		

Reforming the process to select the UN Secretary-General

DETAILS

We achieved historic change in 2016, but we need to consolidate these practices.

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.

Finally, leaks during the 2016 process mean that almost everyone who was watching the process closely knew how almost every state had voted on almost every ballot. Whatever dubious value there is to the secret ballot process has therefore long been lost.

The lack of transparency around the process is unhelpful and allows P5 members in particular to be able to veto candidates using the "coloured ballot paper" process without suffering the diplomatic backlash that should accompany a veto. While relevant powers remain vested in the Security Council it is therefore time to move to fully public voting during the appointment of the Secretary-General.

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

Alleviating poverty and inequality

By reforming the process by which the UN's senior leadership is chosen, we not only maximise the chances of getting the most capable individuals for the job, we also imbue standards of transparency, professionalism and merit that will permeate through the global system.

Improved leadership in top UN jobs will have a positive knock-on effect for the Organisation's ability to deliver across its programme of work.

Enhancing inclusivity and accountability in national and global governance

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Reducing conflict and political violence

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THEORY OF CHANGE

Implementation strategy

Most of these proposed additional reforms can be achieved by adapting the working methods of the Security Council and General Assembly under their existing authority. They do not require charter amendments – rather – implementation depends on establishing them as customary norms, supported by resolutions in the General Assembly.

However, without action to consolidate reforms achieved in 2015/16, hard won gains may not apply to forthcoming selection processes, particularly those relating to the potential reappointment of an incumbent Secretary-General. As the current SG nears the end of his first term there is a real risk that recent progress will be overlooked – this would deliver the process back to the hands of the P5 and constitute a major step backwards. Until these reforms are widely accepted as part of normal practice, it will be hard to make progress on much needed additional reforms (outlined in more detail below).

We would therefore like to see these reforms institutionalised by having them enshrined in further General Assembly resolutions and opportunities such as the political declaration of the UN75 process referring to the positive progress 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.

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

Political will exists to realise this proposal

There are significant allies in the General Assembly to pursue this. In February 2018 120 members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and 25 members of the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency (ACT) group in the annual debate of the Ad-Hoc Working Group Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (AHWG) - a representation of over two thirds of UN member states - called on the General Assembly to start consolidating the major improvements achieved in the run-up to the 2016 selection of the Secretary-General and to institutionalise lessons learned.

Specifically, the following ideas have explicit state backing:
• 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.

What if political will does not exist yet

1 for 7 Billion is a global campaign supported by organisations and individuals from all corners of the globe committed to getting the best UN Secretary-General.

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

This campaign and its allies will mobilise the political will required to effect change. 2020 and the processes established in 2020 will be a critical year.

We did it before and we can do it again.

MITIGATING RISKS

Mitigating climate change

Time and time again, and particularly at the recent UNA-UK - Chatham House conference on the legacy of Kofi Annan, leadership has been referenced as one of the key deficits within our global system. By reforming the process by which the UN's senior leadership is chosen, we not only maximise the chances of getting the most capable individuals for the job, we also imbue standards of transparency, professionalism and merit that will permeate through the global system.

Improved leadership in top UN jobs will have a positive knock-on effect for the Organisation's ability to deliver across its programme of work.

Mitigating pandemics and anti-microbial resistance

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Mitigating weapons of mass destruction

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Mitigating eco-system collapse

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Mitigating the threat from new and emerging technology

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Mitigating unknown risks

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